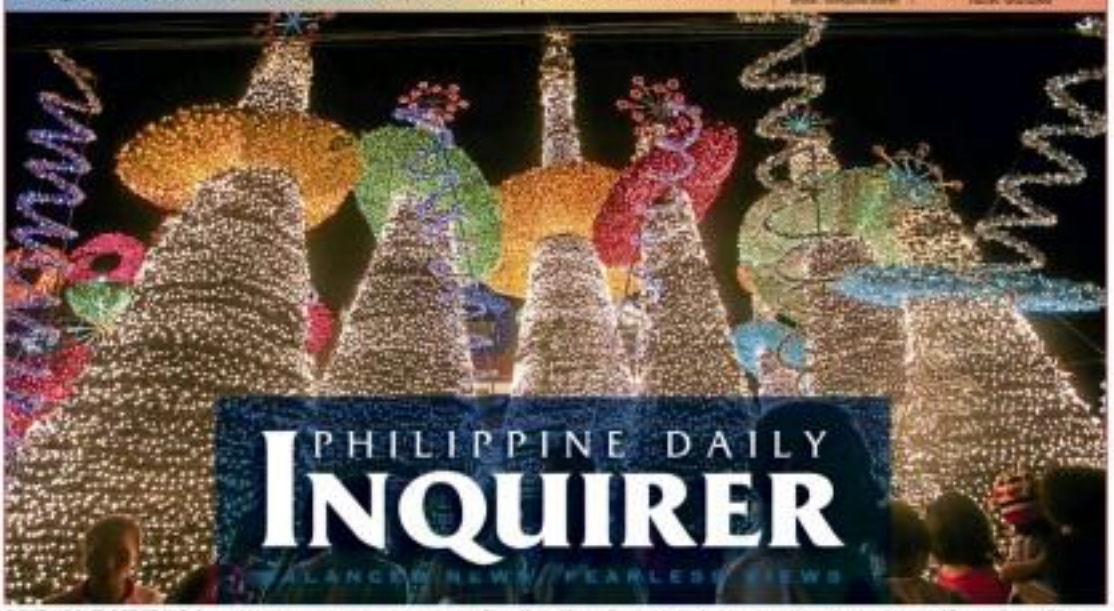
Saturday, December 24, 2011 ★★ 12 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 16 P18 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ DISASTER to 4467 | www.inquirer.net | Twitter: @inquirerdotnet



CHRISTMAS ON THE OTHER SIDE Seemingly a world away from the devastation wrought by Tropical Storm "Sendong" in Northern Mindanao, tourists and locals enjoy the bright lights of Christmas Park on J.P. Laurel Avenue in Davao City. The theme park, set up in front of the antique shop Mano Davao, has been a 12-year-old tradition kept alive by the shop owner for the city folk's holiday entertainment.

NBI: Palparan no-show

Rich urged to take in homeless families

By Jeannette Andrad (with Marvin) and Maricar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

WITH THOUSANDS still huddled in cramped evacuation centers in his city and other calamity-stricken areas, Cagayan de Oro Archbishop Antonio Ledesma is calling on affluent residents and those who escaped the fury of "Sendong" to temporarily take in families left homeless by the tropical storm.

"As we approach Christmas week and the coming of the New Year, may I propose a 'Family-By-Adopt-A-Family' program. Families unaffected by the flood can invite to their homes an evacuee family, especially those who have lost their homes or loved ones, for a few days or for a Christmas meal, to share the

READ A1

Geo-Hazard Map of Northern Mindanao

Bureau waited for surrender of 'Butcher'

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer General Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Expectations of retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. surrendering to authorities were dashed late yesterday afternoon, with still no sign of the fugitive.

At 5:35 p.m., Ricardo Diaz, director of the National Bureau of Investigation office in Central Luzon, said: "For reasons unknown to us the alleged plan to give himself up did not materialize. Manhunt continues."

Only half an hour earlier, Diaz said there was still "a possibility" that Palparan, tagged "Butcher" by activist groups for his alleged link to extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances, would surrender yesterday. "We are on standby just in case," he said.

Diaz denied the inquiries on Palparan's supposed planned surrender at 10 a.m. yesterday but provided no details as to how the NBI was contacted.

NBI A4

TALES FROM THE DEPTHS

'Sendong' death toll may reach 3,000

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—It's going to be "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve for thousands of people who lost their loved ones in the worst storm to hit the country this year.

Many households in the flood-ravaged cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan are grieving. There will be no fireworks, not even firecrackers there. Instead, candles will be lit in houses where power has yet to be restored, and in funeral wakes.

For the first time since Tropical Storm "Sendong" struck on Dec. 16, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) admitted that the missing may be more than the 49 reported to President Aquino on his trip to the disaster zone on Tuesday—four days after the storm struck.

The fear is that the death toll may top 3,000.

Yesterday the NDRRMC put the number of missing at 1,079 and the confirmed death toll at 1,080.

Still, NDRRMC Executive Director Benito Ramos continued to downplay casualty figures.

"We have stopped estimating

SENDONG / A10

So how does Santa deliver all those gifts?

REYKJAVIK, Iceland—The letter came from Italy, addressed "Babbo Natale." Isn't that easy enough to reach this frozen, far-north address, along with hundreds of thousands like it from around the world.

Some arrive without postage. And they're written in a host of languages—"This is Math at sea/table,

SO HOW A11

Widow's home served as Noah's Ark in village

ILIGAN CITY—Lucy Bado's two-story concrete house served pretty much like the biblical Noah's Ark as Tropical Storm "Sendong" unleashed a deluge upon Iligan City a week ago.

As floodwaters began to rampage at Purok 7 village, the 59-year-old widow scoured the neighborhood for people in distress.

Soon, her four-bedroom house was filled with some 100 people, mostly children.

Bado even allowed animals—a goat, pig, chicken, cat—to take shelter there. "Our terrace was filled with animals," she recalled.

Bado's place was the usual haven of Purok 7 residents during emergencies, apart

WIDOW'S A10

'Red hankie from healer saved us'

ILIGAN CITY—Belen Enoy says a dark red handkerchief that a faith healer had given her and her 9-year-old son, along with fervent prayers to God, saved them from Tropical Storm "Sendong's" fury last week.

Enoy, who runs errands as a hotel filled with news people

HANDKERCHIEF A10

We had been warned of Cagayan River's fury

By Antonio J. Montalvan II

(Editor's Note: The author writes for the Inquirer's Opinion section. He is a Mindanao anthropologist, historian, and educator, and is a member of the national advisory board of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.)

I WAS born in Cagayan de Oro, to were my parents and most of my ancestors. The first of our forebears to settle here came in 1790.

COMMENTARY

This is the city of my roots. I then knew firsthand that Cagayan de Oro had never been in the typhoon path. The only aberration historically recorded was in January 1916, when my late father, who was born in 1903, experienced a severely flooded Cagayan de Misamis, as the town was then called.

In what I call the Great Flood of 1916, the Cagayan River overflowed its banks after three

READ A17

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Cloudy with isolated rain showers in the morning; cloudy with scattered rain showers in the afternoon and evening; cooler to warmer in the morning; cooler to warmer in the afternoon; Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Aparri	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Virac	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Thunderstorms	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly Cloudy	Dipolog	Partly Cloudy

Complete weather information: www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph

PCSO Lotto Results

6/42 LOTTO
14 28 8 25 30 24
6/49 SUPER LOTTO
2 0 8 4 0 9
4/6 ULTRA LOTTO
7 3 3 1 0 0 4
PREMADTO DRAW
4 10 21 27 39 43
P11,782,688.40

LOTTO: 24/42 Tues (04 LOTTO, second to 04/42. PCSO photo

Low budget for high-stakes trial

Lawyer questions IBP statement vs CJ impeachment

A LAWYER yesterday questioned the stand of the leadership of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) opposing the impeachment of Chief Justice (CJ) Renato Corona.

"They were not authorized to adopt such a stand without consulting all IBP members. They don't speak for all members," lawyer Perfecto Fresnido, a member of the IBP Pampanga-Las Piñas chapter said.

Fresnido, a practicing corporate and civil lawyer for 15 years, said the statement "has to impeach-bound, defend the institution" signed by IBP president Roan Libarios and national secretary of the board of governors should not be treated as the position of the entire IBP.

"We have our opinions on the impeachment issue. All members should have been consulted first before coming out with such a stand. They (IBP board) were not elected for the purpose of making political statements," he said.

In the IBP statement issued Dec. 14, the group expressed its "grave concern" over the "fast-track" impeachment of the chief justice, saying it subverted the constitutional allocation of powers and prerogatives of the Supreme Court.

Jovanie dating

Solon faces ouster for bribery claim

By Gil Cabacungan

THE HOUSE leadership yesterday moved that Rep. Pastor Alcover of Alliance for Nationalism and Democracy could be expelled if he fails to answer or prove his claim that the 200 lawmakers who impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona were given a P1-million bribe by President Aquino.

House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said: "Where Congressman Alcover made his baseless accusation, he should have been cognizant of the fact that he had practically maligned the honor of the 200 members whose number is sufficient to expel him."

Vote requirement

The House rules require two-thirds vote of the 285 members to expel one of its members for disorderly conduct. Gonzales said that aside from the 200 who signed the impeachment complaint against Corona, 12 more signed a motion to include them in completeness.

Eastern Samar Rep. Ben Evardone said Alcover should retract or prove his claims than the signatories of the Corona impeachment were gifted P1 million each.

"We are ready to move for his expulsion in the ethics committee for making a base-based lie," said Evardone.

'They're shameless'

Alcover was quoted as saying in a press conference earlier:

"They said they accepted it because they want to give Christmas presents to their constituents. They're shameless."

Alcover did not reply to the lawmakers query.

Gonzales said that the House leadership would consult with the majority on what actions to take against Alcover.

"Once all of those who signed the impeachment become aware of how they were maligned and insulted by Alcover, we will make our move," said Gonzales.

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE STAKES are high, but the budget is low.

The Senate has set aside P5 million for the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona, which will start when the chamber ends its Christmas break on Jan. 16.

Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said the amount was relatively small because it would cover only logistical requirements such as food and office equipment and supplies. He said the amount would also be spent on the overtime pay of Senate employees during the trial.

'Over in three months'

"We're not going to spend a lot," he said the budgetor in a previous interview. "Besides, I don't see the trial dragging on. It would probably be over in three months. That would be very long already."

Sen. Gregorio Honasan said completing the impeachment trial sooner than later would benefit the Senate.

"The sooner we get this out of the way, the sooner we can attend to the more serious problems of the country," he said in a separate interview.

Honasan warned against so-called analysts, including the media, "projecting" how senators would vote during the trial. To remove Corona from office, prosecutors from the House of Representatives would need at least 16 affirmative votes in at least one of the eight articles of impeachment against him.

Honasan expressed concern that such projections could be meant to "influence" the public mind even before prosecutors could actually present evidence for the appreciation of the senator-judges.

"Are those all part of public conditioning? But what if the projections are wrong? What if the outcome turns out different? You have to be a Machiavelli to know how senators would vote," he said.

Honasan acknowledged that public opinion would play a role in the decision-making within the 15-member chamber. But he was confident that he and his colleagues would not decide on the fate of Corona simply based on political interests or affiliation.

'We'll all emerge stronger'

"The key here is for us to rise to the occasion. That's what all is asked and done, I am confident that we will all emerge stronger, with our institutions more stable. We can all drive by public interest here."

Senators have promised to spend the holiday break reviewing for the impeachment trial. Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile earlier said he would give Senate President Pro Tempore Jose "Jinggoy" Estrada a crash course on the rules of evidence. He said he wanted to prepare Estrada in case he would not be available as a presiding officer during the trial.

DECEMBER 24-25 DECLARED AS WORLD'S TEN COMMANDMENTS DAY

The World's Law and Grace Day

by GRACE GALINDEZ-GOPANA

TODAY'S Philippines Ambassador of Peace and Security to Israel/Jerusalem to the World Presidential Kingdom of Jerusalem Ecclesiastic Federation Commission

(Nigeria)

For the glory of our Abba Father God Yah-Weh Elohim God Yeshua Ha'Mashiach, the Creator of Heaven, Earth and Mankind, the Supreme Yah-Weh Elohim, the God of Israel through His anointed Son, in the name of our Saviour Adonai Yah-Weh Elohim Ha'Mashiach, who died at Calvary for our eternal salvation by the power of the Ruach Ha'Kodesh (Holy Spirit), amen.

LET US KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE. "We are not fighting against humans. We are fighting against the forces and authorities and against rulers of darkness and powers in the spiritual world". (Ephesians 6:12, CEV).

WE the Kingdom of Yah-Weh Elohim Ecclesiastic Government Federated Jerusalem International – people around the world by Abba Father, YAHweh Elohim, Lord of Israel, Descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Yaacob Chesed'h Descendants of the 12 Tribes of Israel; Believers and Followers of Adonai Yah-Weh Ha'Mashiach; the Body of Messiah, Adonai Yah-Weh Ha'Mashiach (Christ), living in the 7 continents around the world, in the four corners of the earth, declare and decree that December 24 and 25 this year, our world eternity, is the World's Ten Commandments Day of YAHWEH Elohim God of Israel, the 2012 world eternity is the Year of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah and Shekinah of Jubilee the Year of YAHweh God's favor for all mankind on earth as it is in heaven.

JUBILEE OF JUBILEES YEAR 2012

"Jeremiah 'reversal' 1490 vowed are decreed for your people and your holy city to Rabbi Armageddon, to you an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place!" (Daniel 9:24). **PHILIPPINES:** *In celebration, hereof of the Philippines' 400 Years Jubilee of Jubilees (March 31, 1521 – March 31, 2021) from Magellan's discovery of the Philippines*, we, Ecclesiastic, accept, declare and receive the following: 1) YAHweh God's Jubilee Message – inheritance of total healing, restoration, redemption, renewal, release, reconciliation, rest and YAHweh God's revenge for His people 2) Individual Jubilee Living – fresh revelation from YAHweh God; 3) YAHweh Jubilee Anointing – empowerment of the Ruach ha'Kodesh – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, Pastors and Teachers; 4) YAHweh God's Jubilee Deliverance – from all satan's bondage in our personal lives, family business and ministries in the tribes and nations of the Body of YAHshua (Church) of YAHweh God's Jubilee Miracle, Signs and Wonders for the last days.

ISRAEL AND NIGERIA. *In celebration of the 50 YEARS ANNIVERSARY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA and the CELEBRATION OF TWO 40 YEARS OF THE ESTHOPICIA-TION OF ISRAEL/NIGERIA*, Leviticus 23:40-42a, 26-28, given on YAHweh Elohim God's instruction – "Count off seven sabbath years – seven times seven years – so that the seven sabbath years amount to a period of forty-nine years. Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the seventh day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan.

The fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; do not sow and do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the untended vines. For it is a jubilee and must be holy for you; you may what is taken directly from the fields. "In this Year of Jubilee everyone is to return to their own property." Yahweh my decrees and to careful to obey my laws, and you will live safely in the land. Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live there in safety. (NIV)

THE WORLD'S LAW AND GRACE DAY

The Ten Commandments of YAHweh God the Father and the Grace of Yahweh God.

Over three thousand years ago YAHweh Elohim God, the Creator of the mighty universe, personally descended on Mt. Sinai in the desert of Arabia and hand-wrote to Moses two tablets of stone, YAHweh's Ten Commandments. So important are the Ten Commandments that YAHweh Elohim God did not even trust His servant Moses to write them. He wrote them by Himself – with His own fingers in the midst of thunders and lightning. The event is recorded in Exodus chapters 19 and 31. The Ten Commandments are the Code of Conduct for Christians the entire human race. They are holy, perfect and immutable.

Exodus 31: 18, "And He gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mt. Sinai, two tablet of testimony, tablet of stone, written with the fingers of YAHweh Elohim God."

Deuteronomy 9: 10, "Moses gave me two stone tablets inscribed by the finger of YAHweh Elohim God. On them were all the commandments the LORD proclaimed to you on the mountain out of the fire, on the day of the assembly."

The Ten Commandments are eternal. According to YAHshua Ha'Mashiach, the law is scheduled to outlast the present universe. The spiritual principles of the Ten Commandments are eternal and unchanging as the Almighty Himself. Matthew 5:17-19, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

According to the Holy Scriptures, YAHweh God's Ten Commandments are the "constitution" of the law." The letter has come to take a close look at the Ten Commandments and to request if one committed in ignorance or knowingly. 1 John 3: 4, "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness." Romans 6: 23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of YAHweh Elohim God is eternal life through YAHshua Ha'mashiach, our Lord."

The Law of the Ten Commandments carries out and enforces the curse upon everyone who violates them. YAHweh's grace is His free incarnate Adonai YAHshua Ha'mashiach, who for the love of the world came to an understanding and unworthy sinners. He is the only one in the history of the world who lived a perfect life.

This is connected based Grace is in its purest and unadulterated form of YAHweh Elohim God's love. YAHshua Ha'mashiach died in the place of us who rejected His perfect love and accepted Him as our personal Lord and Saviour. He is the only one who stood between God's wrath and us. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound' for grace shall be universal, whereas, sin causes we.

This is the fundamental of YAHweh Elohim God's law. He created mankind in His own image and likeness, and gave all of us laws abound, we are all are under the death penalty of the law. Once we have accepted forgiveness and mercy, then we are no longer under the "death penalty of the law," but are now 'under grace' Being 'under grace' means we have to persevere. We accept YAHshua Ha'mashiach as our personal Lord and Saviour. We become a recipient of the Yahweh Elohim grace. The Holy Spirit-Ruach Ha'kodesh, resides in our hearts and lives. He, as we obey grace on the power that we might live a life of righteousness. Without being under grace it is no excuse for continuing in sin. No one is above the law! Those who ignore these facts do so at their peril. That a sinner who repents is no longer under the curse and death of YAHweh Elohim God. That person is no longer under the death penalty of the law but is now under the grace of YAHweh Elohim God. Because of this, we, the Kingdom of Jerusalem Yahweh God Federation International declare every December 24 and 25 as the World's Commemoration of LAW AND GRACE the World's Ten Commandments Day and Grace Day, freeing our depravity and need for a Savior and Redeemer, and the supreme abundance of YAHweh Elohim God's love, mercy and grace, for whoever will repent and accept YAHshua Ha'mashiach as their Lord and Savior.

OUR PRAYER AND DECLARATIONS

1 We, the Kingdom of Israelites, Yahweh Elohim Ecclesiastic Federation International in name and re-dedicate our selves and nations to Yahweh Elohim God and declare that the people all over the world, declare that we will be love and obedient to all Israelites nations because from the fraternity of domestic nations to the ex-enemy nations, to love, kindness, friendship to every aspect, corruption, injustice, greed and lust for power, hatred, violence, lawlessness, hatred, discord, evil desires, greed, anger, malice, slander, abusive language and filthy talk. (Colossians 3:5-9)

5 We, declare that the world's humanity's culture, beliefs and traditions will come under the authority of the Word of YAHweh Elohim God, His Holy Scriptures, and that all things in our culture are aligned with the Word of Yahweh's commandments and statutes, and decrees, festivals, holy convocations under His law. 'Thus said Almighty YAHweh: I AM YAHWEH (ELO-HIM) – 'Hail Mary' Yes Mary is considered to be conceived in the name of Adonai Yahshua Ha'Mashiach, sealed by the power of Ruach Ha-Kodesh (Holy Spirit).

2 We confess and repent of all the sins of our nations, and of all of ourselves, here and there. We choose people of Yahweh Elohim God the not accepting who they are as a people, chosen race and as a nation whom You reminded your Holy Scriptures Torah, commandments and instructions to bless all the nations. We will now love, stand, support and pray for Israel, to obedience to Yahweh Elohim God's Word. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, may they rest in peace, those who love you". (Psalm 122:6). Now we are the tribes and nations accepts and believes Adonai Yahshua Ha-Mashiach, as the Saviour of whom of Yahweh Elohim God's Word, and the Cross of the Tribe of Judah, for upon His shoulder is the eternal government of Yahweh Elohim God (Isaiah 9:6-7).

3 We consensus all nations-God's governments, whereas and deceptions into Anti Yahweh Elohim God, the Creator, Anti Yahweh Elohim God, is Yahweh Ha'Mashiach, the Holy Spirit, Anti Israel, False Prophets initiated by Material/Satan, Counterfeit Resurrection, Superstitions, Sunday Worship, False Worship, Anti Semitic, Anti Christian, Gregorian New Year, Roman Calendar, Horoscopes, Valentine's Day, Christmas New Year, Pagan Roots, we come out of her centers, the Babylonian Mystery Religion.

6 In the Spirit of Yahweh Elohim God's Jubilee of Jubilees, we declare and decree that every citizen will love the character of the fruit of Ruach Ha'Kodesh, the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23). Now we celebrate the True Biblical feast ordained by Yahweh God of Israel, Weekly Sabbath, seventh year Sabbaths, 50th year Sabbaths (Jubilee), Feast of Passover, Unleavened bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of atonement, feast of Tabernacles, Shmini Atzeret, Simchat Torah.

7 We will now obey Yahweh Elohim God's Word, the Holy Scripture, Call Him in His Name and declare Yah'Weh Elohim God is ONE. DEUTERONOMY 6:4 – Hal Hay Yay Hay God the true – Yahshua Ha'Mashiach and follow His Ten Commandments as the Moral Code for our standard, laws and principles for our nations, prosperity, peace and justice only by Yahweh God's grace and mercy.

The Commandments of Yahweh – God of Israel: 1. Thou shalt have no other Yahweh Elohim before Me. 2. Thou shalt not make unto Thee any graven images. 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Yahweh thy Elohim in vain. 4. Remember the Shabbath to keep it holy. 5. Honor thy father and thy mother. 6. Thou shalt not murder. 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery. 8. Thou shalt not steal. 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. 10. Thou shalt not covet.

8 By faith, in the name of our Savior and King, Adonai Yahshua Ha'Mashiach, by the authority of Yahweh Elohim the Yahweh, the Elder of Elders Yahweh Elohim God Hay Yay Hay God of Israel, They Will be Done, Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory as it was in the beginning, now and forever. (NIV).

P-Noy: Learning's over; we'll do better in 2012

By Norman Bordadora

SAYING HE had now gone past the "learning curve," President Aquino on Thursday said he expected to do better in 2012 than this year.

Asked what he was looking forward to in the next 365 days of his six-year term as chief executive, President Aquino said he hoped that the country would weather the global economic crisis and that his drive to attain what he called reforms in the judiciary would move faster.

"Well, Sir, I, we're hoping that we will be able to weather the current economic storm, that we will do a lot better than what we did this year," President Aquino told reporters after welcoming back home returning overseas Filipino workers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, which has become a traditional activity in the presidency.

Past learning curve

"And we are done with the learning curve. We've already put in place many systems that should correct the issues with regards to making sure that corruption is being combated," he added.

In making his last reference to judiciary, the President said, "A lot of our problems had to deal with various events this past year."

President Aquino has recently launched a series of attacks on Chief Justice Renato Corona after the Supreme Court granted ex-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's petition that the government be restrained from barring her from leaving the country despite having a complaint of electoral sabotage.

Corona is scheduled to undergo an impeachment trial before the Senate in January after Mr. Aquino's allies in the House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to endorse the articles of impeachment against the country's top magistrate.

Wish for 2012

Asked earlier this month before a news forum what his topmost wish for 2012, President Aquino said, "Of course, if I can maintain the goodwill and the support that the people have been giving me, that is really such a tremendous gift and I hope to be deserving of the same.

The latest Social Weather Stations (SWS)

3 of 5 Pinoys see happy Christmas

AROUND three of five Filipinos (61 percent) expect a "happy" Christmas, while strong good health and family togetherness top the list of the Filipinos "we all most like to celebrate" this year, according to the latest survey by the Social Weather Stations (SWS).

But the Fourth Quarter Social Weather survey also found an unprecedented 11 percent of respondents saying they expected Christmas to be "sad" and 24 percent saying they expected Christmas to be "neither happy nor sad."

"The 61 percent expecting a happy 2011 Christmas is five points down from last year, when expectations of a happy Christmas rebounded to 69 percent after being flat at 62 percent in 4Q percent from 2010 to 2009," SWS said in a statement released yesterday.

The percentage of those who expected a sad Christmas increased from 7 percent last year to 11 percent this year, surpassing the "all-time high sadness level" of 10 percent posted in 2009 and 2010, SWS noted.

Open-ended question

To an open-ended question about the gift they would most like to receive this coming Christmas, 52 percent mentioned material gifts, such as money (23 percent), food (8 percent), and house/home and lot (6 percent), while 33 percent mentioned intangible/abstract things as good health (13 percent), and family togetherness this Christmas (13 percent).

It was the first time SWS asked the question and respondents were allowed to give only one answer.

Across areas, expectations of a happy Christmas were highest in Mindanao at 69 percent (from 71 percent last year), followed by Luzon outside Metro Manila (64 percent, from last year's 70 percent), Visayas (61 percent), from last year's 73 percent) and Metro Manila (60 percent, from last year's 55 percent).

Across socioeconomic classes, expectations of a happy Christmas were highest among class ABC (74 percent, from last year's 68 percent), followed by class D (60 percent from last year's 70 percent), and class E (60 percent, from last year's 67 percent).

Expectations of a happy Christmas were "about the same" among men (61 percent) and women (61 percent), according to SWS. "However, there are slightly more women (13 percent) than men (10 percent) who expect a sad Christmas to be."

Expectations of a happy Christmas were higher among younger people, with 67 percent among those aged 18-24 years, 66 percent among those aged 25-34 and 68 percent among those aged 35-44 saying they were expecting a happy Christmas this year. Sixty-three percent among those aged 45-54, and 56 percent aged 55 and older, had the same opinion. Inquirer Research

survey contains some good news for the President in this matter. He is ending the year with a "very good" satisfaction rating, according to he poll and Pi's survey.

However, the poll was conducted from Dec. 3 to Dec. 7, before the President was assailed for canceling the Christmas party of the Presidential Security Group at a time when people in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan and other areas were struggling with the aftermath of the killer floods that claimed the lives of over 1,000 persons.

Results of the survey published yesterday in the Inquirer/Pulse Asia newspaper showed Mr. Aquino's net satisfaction rating by to +58 (71 percent satisfied minus 13 percent dissatisfied) from September's +56 (70 percent satisfied minus 14 percent dissatisfied).

The December figure is below Mr. Aquino's personal record high of +64 obtained in November 2010, only five months into his term. With a report from Ana Roa, Inquirer Research

Congratulating partnerships in healthcare

Smart congratulates all stakeholders of ASCENT, Wireless Access for Health and PhilHealth Remittance-by-Air for three healthcare innovations which were cited during the first Galing Likha-Kalusugan Awards!

KABALIKAT SA KALUSUGAN | SMART
smart.com.ph

Health Advisory
Kalusugan sa Kapaskuhan

Ang kapaskuhan ay mas masaya,
kung ang pamilya ay malusog at masigla.
Isaalala ang 12 mensahe para sa kalusugan sa kapaskuhan.

1. Maghanda nang maaga para sa makahulugan na Kapaskuhan upang ang stress ay maiwasan.

Ang pagmumuniliti at labis na paghanda sa pagdiwang ng Pasko ay maaring magdulot ng pagkabahala at mga komplikasyon sa sakit sa puso at altapresyon.

2. Magregalo sa mga bata ng mga laruan na ligtas at angkop sa kanilang edad at abilidad.

Pilin ang mga laruan na walang bahaging matalis, matulis, nakakalason, madaling matunaw o kayo'y may maliliit na bahagi na maaring nabo at makabara sa lalamunan at makatarok sa mata. Ilong o tenga. Basahin ang etiketa o tatak sa pakete ng produkto at sundin ang mga paunta para sa tamang paggamit nito.

3. Bumili lamang ng mga produktong lehitimo at rehistrado upang ligtas na Kapaskuhan ay masigurado.

Pangalagaan ang kapalig nan , kahoogan at pamilya. Tsuiken na ang mga christmas lights, pand at iliang dekorasyon sa bahay ay galing sa rehistrado at lehitimo na tindahan. Huwag iwanan ang mga ilaw pangdekorasyon, kasa ang mga ito bago matulog o kapag aalis ng bahay para maiwasan ang sunog.

4. Noche Buena at Media Noche ay paghandaan, masustansyang pagkain, gulay at prutas ang ihain sa kainan.

Ang gulay at prutas ay mabuba sa kalorlya at malang taglay na kolesterol. Ang mga ito ay tagpasa sa mga bitamina at mineral na magpapalgla ng katawan at magbibigay proteksyon sa sakit at impeksyon.

5. Mga pagkain na ihahanda ay tiyaking malinis at sariwa upang ang inyong pamilya'y siguradong ligtas sa food poisoning.

Bumili ng pamutong at pagkain mula sa tiyak at mapagkakatiwalang tindahan. Pawalihin na mainit, mayy lalay o nakatago sa ice box o refrigerator upang maiwasan ang pagkasira o kontaminadong pagkain.

6. Dumalo sa bawat salo-salo sa Pasko, ngunit sapat lamang na pagkain sa plato ang bantayan mo.

Maraming kanyahan sa Pasko at maraming okasyon para magsalo-salo sa marami ing handaan. Huwag baligtaan na kumain ng tamang dami lamang. Iwasan ang "second serving" para makaiwas sa madalas na pagtaas ng timbang ng katawan tuwing Kapaskuhan.

7. Umiwas sa labis na matatabo at maasiat na pagkain upang puso at pangangatawan ay manatiling malusog.

Ang marubu at maasiat na mga pagkain ang madalas na nagdudulot ng sakit sa puso at iba pang sakit sa pangangatawan .

8. Magsaya at magdiwang kung Kapaskuhan, subalit labis na pag-inom ng alak at mga nakalalasing na inumin ay iwasan. Huwag magmaneho ng sasakyan kapag naka-inom ng alak.

Ang labis na pag-inom ng alak ay nagdudulot ng panuda sa atay at komplikasyon sa sakit sa puso o "stroke". Ang pagmumaneho nang lasing ay kasamang sanhi ng nakapatmala o makamamatay na aksidente sa kalye at lansangan.

9. Maglakad, tumakbo, sumayaw o regular na mag-ehersisyo para masigla ang katawan sa Pasko.

Ang katamtaman at regular na gawaing pisikal ay mainaming dulot na benepisyo sa puso, mga buto at utak. Ito ay nakakatagdag sa self-esteem o maayos na pamatawan sa sarili.

10. Pahinga at sapat na oras ng pagtulog ay kailangan sa mahabang panahon nang kasayahan sa Kapaskuhan.

Magtaan ng panahon para sa sapat na pahinga, talog at alwan ng pamilya. Ito ay nakakatulong upang mapanumbalik ang kasiglahan ng katawan at isipan.

11. Aksyon: Paputok Injury Reduction
Umiwas sa Disgrasya Dulot ng Paputok.

1. Mapanguro ang paggamit ng paputok.
2. Lukat ng paputok ay bawal sa bata.
3. Ikiwas sa mga taong magpapaputok.
4. Huwag mamulot ng mga di sumabog na paputok.
5. Magpagamot kaagad kapag napatukan.

12. Aksyon: Paputok Injury Reduction
Magdiwang ng Pasko at Bagong Taon nang ligtas

1. Magpost at makilahok sa Community Fireworks Display.
2. Magdiwang nang ligtas kasama ang pamilya.
3. Lumikha ng ingay gamit ang iliong bagay tulad ng kawali, kutsara, mesilla, lata at iba pa.
4. Makisaya sa iliang paruan tulad ng street party, concert, palaro at iba pa.
5. Manood sa mga local ng nakatakam at magpmala nang maayos na bahay sa Bagong Taon..

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NBI: Palparan no-show

From page A1

The retired major general and three others are charged with kidnapping and serious illegal detention. Kidnapping is a non-bailable offense.

Two of the others charged, Lt. Col. Felipe Anonuevo and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osorio, are now in police custody in Camp Crame, Quezon City. But Palparan and the fourth charged, M/Sgt. Raul Eduarte, have eluded arrest since Monday, when warrants for their arrest were issued by Judge Teodoro Gonzales of Regional Trial Court Branch 14 in Malolos, Bulacan province.

The case originated from the abduction of University of the Philippines student activists Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño in Hagonoy, Bulacan, in June 2006, or three months before Palparan retired as commander of the 7th Infantry Division in Eastern Mindanao, Nueva Ecija province.

Cadapan and Empeño have not been seen by their families since then.

04 SEPTEMBER 2006, retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. (center) before the Philippine Commission that he and his men were involved in the abduction and killing of activists.

Custody

In Manila, NBI spokesperson Cecilio Tamesa said authorities had yet to receive confirmation of Palparan's surrender despite information from Diaz that the wanted man would yield to authorities.

But in the event that the surrender comes to pass, the matter of who between the NBI and the Philippine National Police is to take custody of Palparan will have to be decided by the court that issued the arrest warrant, Tamesa said.

Diaz was assigned to serve the arrest warrant on Palparan, who has not been heard from since Monday when investigators presented permitted him from boarding a Singapore-bound plane at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pampanga.

NBI agents serving the arrest warrant failed to find Palparan on Tuesday despite an earlier assurance from him issued through the media that he would not resist arrest.

But he questioned the legality of the kidnapping charges lodged against him, pointing out that an earlier complaint for torture and rape had been dismissed by the Department of Justice.

Judge Gonzales has also issued hold-departure orders on Palparan and the others accused.

Trackers on the job

PNP Director General Nicanor Bartolome said efforts to track down Palparan were ongoing.

"We continue hunting him down. Our tracker teams are not stopping their efforts, and we won't stop coordinating with the NBI [on this matter]," he said.

Echoing Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, Bartolome said he would discuss with Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo the possibility of making a cash reward in exchange for information that could lead to Palparan's arrest.

"A reward will be a big help to us because the assistance of the community will contribute greatly toward finding him. We will [also] discuss this with Secretary Robredo," he said.

Contacted later by phone, Robredo confirmed plans to raise a bounty for Palparan's capture. He said the amount was still being discussed.

Bartolome told reporters that Palparan should come out of hiding. "It's better for him to face his problems and prove that he is not guilty."

He added: "Our police and the NBI have ways of finding a person so that finally the long arm of the law will reach him."

Bartolome also said the PNP was checking out "many places" in the country to find Palparan. He declined to elaborate so as not to jeopardize operations.

Like GMA

In Baguio City, the president of a party-list group representing indigenous peoples said Palparan should prepare himself for Christmas in jail.

"Like his former boss, [former President] Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Palparan [or all] should spend Christmas in jail and serve the full extent of the penalty attached to the grave crimes they have committed," said Beverly Longid of the Kalipunan ng Kalumaran Pilipinas party-list group.

Arroyo, now a Pampanga representative, is under hospital arrest at Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City for alleged electoral sabotage.

Longid said Katribu was holding Palparan responsible for the alleged torture of the late Manuela Pakibing in his own "nine" Cordilleran community (formerly resort) in Mountain Province and another man identified only as Abok in 2004, when Palparan was assigned to the highlands.

"Human rights violations such as the soldiers deployed in the Cordillera and other indigenous communities shouldn't not be rewarded with medals and promotions. They should be prosecuted in the full extent of the law. They should be the ones in jail, not the hundreds of human rights defenders now detained all over the country on trumped-up charges," Longid said. With reports from Karen Boncocan and MJ Sta. in Manila and Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Netizens urged to help in manhunt

By TJ Burgonio

THE HUNT for the "Butcher" goes virtual.

The Bad Impunity Al Kanser, a network of rights abuse victims and media defenders, is asking the State for Jovito Palparan Jr. to be its terror, enlisting Facebook users to put up the "Wanted: Palparan" posters released by rights groups Karapatan, Desaparecidos and Tortyrus.

"All netizens are required to post this poster on their profiles to make it known to the terror users the face and name of this notorious human rights violator and seek information on his whereabouts so that he will be arrested," Cristina Palabay, an alliance convener, said yesterday.

Palabay also suggested that Facebook users post their own "Support the call of the mothers of Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño for a PEOPLES MANHUNT for Palparan! JAIL PALPARAN! JUSTICE FOR ALL VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS!" Use this profile picture to spread the word about the need to arrest one of the most notorious human rights violators."

The kidnapping and torture (illegal detention) case against Palparan and three others stemmed from the 2006 abduction of University of the Philippines students Cadapan and Empeño, whose mothers have rallied on the public to tip off authorities on the fugitive's whereabouts.

Palabay reiterated the mothers' call for help in the hunt for the retired major general.

"Three days after the issuance of the warrants of arrest against Palparan et al., he has evaded accountability by using to leave the country and by being a fugitive," Palabay said.

"We call on the public to help the victims' mothers by giving information, which is not only an exercise of vigilance and compassion, but also an act, however small, of making preparations pay for their high crimes against the victims and the Filipino people," she added.

"Ending impunity in the country, when state instrumentalities have been remiss in pursuing justice and accountability, rests on the people's advocacy and struggle for genuine democracy and freedom."

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3. Iwasang magkabuhol-buhol ang mga Christmas lights.
4. Huwag isaksak ang lahat ng Christmas lights sa isang socket para maiwasan sa overload at sunog.
5. Ilayo sa Christmas lights ang mga bagay na madaling masunog.
6. Mag- indoor at outdoor Christmas lights. Siguraduhing pang-outdoor use ang mga Christmas lights at patamuting isaabit sa labas ng bahay o establisimiento.
7. Alisin sa saksakan ang Christmas lights bago magpalit ng ibang bumbilya.

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For Child Approval

Heirs want dead man's graft conviction overturned

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE FAMILY of a former Bohol town treasurer has sought the dismissal of its graft and malversation cases, after the Sandiganbayan convicted him of unlawfully disbursing public funds. The treasurer he died shortly before the court handed down the decision.

In a motion, the heirs of Prudencio Digamon said the case against him should be dismissed because he died from a heart attack before the Sandiganbayan First Division could pronounce him guilty.

"The order is clear death of the accused before final judgment extinguishes both his criminal liability and civil liability or delict," Digamon's heirs said, adding that the bad loans he had guaranteed should also be cancelled. The Sandiganbayan Fifth Division had found Digamon and former Bayawa, Bohol, Mayor Divelet Dumayas guilty of releasing checks not backed by supporting documents, and said there was a valid inference of misappropriation once the officials failed to account for the disbursement of the checks. The ruling was handed down on Dec. 29.

Dumayas has filed a motion for reconsideration on the decision, which remains pending.

Digamon's heirs told the court that his client died on Nov. 10, two days before the court promulgated its decision on the case. The lawyer formally informed the court on Dec. 6 of Digamon's death.

Digamon was sentenced to six to 10 years imprisonment for each of the six counts of violation of the anti-graft law, and 12 to 20 years imprisonment for each of the two counts of malversation of public funds. Dumayas was sentenced to serve 10 years imprisonment for each of the nine counts of graft, and also to 12 to 20 years in jail for each of the two counts of malversation.

Digamon and Dumayas were ordered to jointly pay P358,815 in actual damages and a fine of P54,612.

In his defense, Digamon had contended that the checks were drawn to defray employees' salaries and various projects, while Dumayas said these were funded by cooperatives where personnel for his signature.

Meanwhile, in a separate motion, Dumayas asked the Sandiganbayan to reverse its earlier ruling and to acquit him of the criminal charges.

He said the evidence failed to show that he had issued checks without corresponding vouchers.

CAREER-TURNED-TOTH

President Aquino gives the medical to Calapan City Mayor Pauline Salvador Leachon, a former candidate who went out of The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM). Mr. Aquino conferred the award to the mayor in a simple ceremony in Malacañang on credit for excellence and leadership in the field of community development, saying the country is still in need of leaders for bringing about transformation. Leachon is not only the first female chief executive of Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan] region. The other awardees are Ms. Bernarda Gregorio Arroyo, Valenzuela City Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian, infectious diseases physician Dr. Rand Romero, music director Gerardo Joseph Salonga, and entrepreneurs Edgar Sia II and Antonio Tiu. Also in photo is Ms. Rosa Leachon, wife of the mayor.

Your mail is safe, says Philpost

By TeoAvesCastillo

SENDING mail through the post office can give more reliable after the Philippine Postal Corp. (Philpost) joined forces with the Philippine National Police (PNP) recently to secure delivery vans.

Delivery of mail services during the holiday season, which runs from October to January, is usually marred by hijacking of postal delivery vans, but Postmaster General Jose de la Cruz told the business that since the PNP started providing escorts to the delivery vans on Nov. 3, no hijacking has been reported.

Over the past years, Philpost is usually hit by five hijacking incidents before the end of January. This goal is to have no such incidents this year, especially since PNP Chief Director Nicolas Bay named a director to PNP Regional directors and the Highway Patrol Group to provide necessary police assistance to Philpost.

"Our mail delivery vans are now being monitored by PNP to prevent hijacking and holdup incidents. In the past, the prevalence of such activity was high during the holiday season," he [illegible] yesterday.

Philpost delivers about one million mail matters per month during the holiday season, double the usual volume of about 500,000 pieces.

Where there will be the push to bring delivered over commercial items, including cosmetics, clothes, gadgets and other electronic devices, costing three pesos for parts of [illegible].

With the new collaboration, the PNP is given the delivery schedule of Philpost, enabling police officials to closely monitor movements of mail matters.

De la Cruz said the win was encouraged by the partnership and the fact that there has been no hijacking since the end of December proves that "the partnership is efficient."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

[illegible]

Pasay judge appointed to appeals court

By Jocelyn Ating

PRESIDENT Aquino has chosen a Pasay City judge to be a member of the Court of Appeals, according to the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC).

Pasay Regional Trial Court Executive Judge Helen Cortes was appointed associate justice by Aquino on Nov. 11 for the appointment position, according to [illegible] JBC chair, Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona, on Dec. 21.

Cortes was selected by the President from a list of five judges submitted by the JBC. Other nominees included fellow judges Maria Luisa Quilla, Sebastian de Castro Jr., Hector Hofilena and Oscar Herrada.

Cortes gained prominence [illegible] in 2005 for speedily convicting a bicycle driver for robbing a Belgian delegate who attended the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Manila. The judge meted out the prison term another on the night [illegible] 24 hours after he was arrested by the police.

Cortes was also the judge who ordered the arrest of Senator Juan Ponce Enrile's father for an earthquake [illegible].

The judge was last in headlines in July this year when he temporarily stopped the Justice and interior departments from ordering the closure of [illegible] jueteng betting stations.

Cortes backed the restoration of the death penalty during a [illegible] dialogue forum in Davao City held in 2005.

"Imprisonment is repugnant for this man, so the best way to deter criminality is to execute those with death sentences... If you don't execute, how long should the state provide and spend for their sustenance and how sure are we that he would not kill anybody anymore," Cortes was quoted as saying in an article on the blog [illegible] Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

With capital punishment reinstated, criminals would be [illegible] would be thinking twice before committing a crime, the judge said.

Cortes will fill up the seat left by Associate Justice Ruben Ayson who retired in March. Cortes was previously nominated to the court or vacancies in the Court of Appeals and the Sandiganbayan but [illegible].

Rich folk urged to take in homeless families

From page A1

spirit of the season," Lorenzo said in a pastoral letter issued yesterday.

The archbishop noted that almost everyone in Cagayan de Oro owns his or her relatives or friends in the temporary housing project.

"Schools have lost some student and staff, officemates have not reported because of the condition of their homes, and a number of underskilled bodies still await a dignified burial as the common resting place," he said.

He added: "The challenge for us now is to help rebuild the lives and broken homes of the survivors." The task may involve repairing their genuine houses or relocating them to safer grounds, he said.

Lorenzo also agreed to suggestions that the affected families no longer be allowed to return to areas considered extremely dangerous.

"In January 2009, the city had already experienced severe flooding. Some old stone residents recalled that the phenomenon happens every 40 years. But lately these years after, floods are becoming more with greater vengeance," he said.

The bishop also lauded the volunteers and organizations who have shared their time, energy and resources to help the victims, including the 7,000 families or 45,000 individuals now taking shelter in 14 evacuation centers in Cagayan de Oro City.

Students skip break

Assistance of the sorts seems to hold true also shown no signs of waning.

Instead of going home to their respective provinces for the Christmas break, a number of students from the University of the Philippines (UP) campus in Los Baños, Laguna province, volunteered to stay and take part in relief missions.

"We have one volunteer who scheduled his flight to the Visayas on Dec. 24 instead of going home earlier but took," said Andrew Urtea, volunteer and Aklan Urtea, coordinator of the Kalasanan party-list group in the Southern Tagalog region.

The group, convinced the newer the People Republic (UPPR), an alliance of UP Los Baños activists formed in the 1970s, which Urtea said had been involved volunteerism natural calamities struck the region.

Although it was Northern Mindanao that suffered most from the wrath of Sendong, "we will aim the necessary for relief efforts because we, too, have experienced the same during (Tropical Storm) Ondoy," Urtea said, referring to the killer storm that ravaged Metro Manila and many parts of Luzon in 2009.

Urtea reported that since Dec. 20, the UPR had raised P30,000 in cash and collected clothes and relief items enough to fill two jeepneys. The brigade had set up drop-off points in Los Baños and San Pablo City with the help of the Bayanihang Pilipino Lions civic group, she added.

While on their holiday break, students from Los Baños Student High School have also tapped to help in the repacking of the donations. STPB's relief mission will continue until the classes resume in January 2012, she said.

Help for minorities

The Federation of Free Workers (FFW) also launched its own relief drive for trade unionists affected by Sendong.

The FFW yesterday said it would coordinate relief operations on Dec. 27 in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan, starting with about 250,000 in cash and pledges, and used clothing donated by its staff and member groups. The group has opened its central office in Manila, Manila. (Tel. No. 521-0624 and 644-1616 for donations.)

The FFW president, Jose Mario Ali, said 19 workers from its affiliate groups in the Cagayan de Oro port and wharf had their houses destroyed by the flood. Twelve members of the 350-strong Coca-Cola Free Workers Union in Cagayan de Oro City were also affected.

In the town of Maramag, Bukidnon province, six injured workers lost their homes while 28 members suffered damage to their property, Ilocandido added. In Iligan, the Dalaw-line of three members of the National Steel Corp. Labor Union remained missing, while 39 other members lost their homes.

From Compostela

Despite having an own share of Sendong victims, officials and residents of Compostela Valley province were happy to close who were hit much harder.

Just before dawn on Thursday two dump trucks rolled out of the capitol in Nabunturan town to bring 200 sacks of rice and hundreds of boxes of bottled water, noodles, canned goods and medicines to neighboring Davao, said the provincial information office in Mawaran.

In a phone interview, Compostela Valley Gov. Arturo Uy said relief goods would also be sent to Cagayan de Oro City in the next few days.

"Their two areas suffered much. We have more than enough for our own residents who were affected so we expect to send help to those who need it more," he said.

At least five persons were killed in Uy's province during Sendong's onslaught, mostly children swept in a landslide in Monkayo town. Around 30 farmers were damaged.

In Davao, another Compostela town, soldiers from the Army's 71st Infantry Battalion and members of volunteer group Youth for Peace were assisted neighborhoods and used loudspeakers to ask for relief items.

Invasion make coffins

In Digos City, a convoy of trucks laden a special delivery on Wednesday: more relief goods—and about 100 white coffins courtesy of Zamboanga del Sur.

The coffins were made by inmates of the provincial jail, according to Zamboanga del Sur Gov. Antonio Cerilles, who oversaw a 30-minutes memorial rites.

From Davao City, Mayor Sara Duterte and her father, Vice Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, visited Cagayan de Oro and Iligan on Wednesday, bringing with them several dump trucks loaded with bottled water and relief goods. The Davao City officials also rammed over cash donations.

Inquirer drive

At the business, the newspaper's relief drive, which was launched on Monday, continued to receive donations in cash and in kind.

Among the latest donors were Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada, Binding Governor Phils., Tesda Head Phils., Print Town, Agnes Devas, one Mr. Tan, Bernie Reyeses, Jesus Jr. Jessy Pyrah, Chavez, Jackie and Danielle Binay, Quin, Jessie and Carolina Go, Casimiro Ysmael Jr. Mylene de Jesus, Cesar Drew, Jeanne Abok Maria Pores, Jeanne nat, Jazmin accounting and editorial departments, Inquirer Group of Companies, and several anonymous donors.

Donations received in kind by the Inquirer will be distributed today, Christmas Eve, to the flood victims in Cagayan de Oro and other parts of Mindanao through the Philippine Red Cross.

The drive will no longer receive donations in kind, but cash may still be deposited to the Inquirer Relief Account of the Philippine Islands (BPI) current account No. 3051-0007-86, under the name Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc., until Dec. 29.

Interested parties may call Bianca Kasilag or Connie Kalaygan of the Inquirer's acquisitions office at 897-8000 and 8924426. With reports from Bernadette O. Reyes, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Tetsuo L. Lim and Ryan B. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao

Displaced teachers still give aid

By Tara Quinsaat

EDUCATION Secretary Armin Luistro was moved to tears by what the employees of his Department had done for the victims of Tropical Storm "Sendong."

Public school teachers living in the devastated areas still volunteered to prepare meals at the evacuation centers, even if they themselves had lost family members or their homes in the flood, Luistro told the Inquirer on Thursday.

Almost all the teachers, even after their homes were flooded or they had loved ones, are there helping each other," said the official, who flew to Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City to survey the work to see the Sendong's ground zero up close.

"Without any prompting from us, the teachers were the ones cooking food for evacuees. They scrounged around and drew from their own pockets to help feed the evacuees even before help came from outside," he said.

Another heartwarming and unexpected group proved to come when he returned to Manila. Bobby Gonzalez of the Department of Education (DepEd) central office in Pasig City) decided to donate the sacks of rice the secretary earlier gave them supposedly for their Christmas party celebration.

"When I asked what happened, I was told that they changed their. That made me cry. I was totally able to give them anything and yet they decided to give it up," said an emotional Luistro.

"I think the poor know what it means to go through something like that. And I say whenever that happens, when you see that kind of generosity, that's a moment, something you never don't expect," he added.

Other government workers joined the bandwagon for the relief effort.

A relief drive launched by the Bureau of Customs head office in Manila has raised P600,000, with Commissioner Ruffy Biazon donating his salary for December (around P75,000) and an additional P150,000 from his personal savings.

"I might be criticized for revealing this, maybe for bragging about it. But I'm not bragging about it; it's an act of leadership calling on our colleagues to join in. We will learn (the money) is sent to the Red Cross," he said.

With a report from Jaymee Anog

Washed up logs to be used in building homes

By TJ Burgonio

TIBUR LOGS that tumbled down on Digan City from a swollen river and left a wide swath of destruction will be used to build the homes of some of thousands of victims of Tropical Storm "Sendong," officials said yesterday.

President Aquino has ordered Environment Secretary Ramon Paje to confiscate the estimated 5,000 cubic meters of logs and more these serve as flood Defense Secretary Gregorio Soliman.

"The President's instruction is to use these logs to build the homes of those who had lost their abode," Paje said in an interview by phone.

According to Paje, if 65 percent of the logs he ordered confiscated on Thursday would be processed into lumber, this would be roughly equivalent to 1.37 million board feet. A 10-wheel truck can load 10,000 board feet of lumber.

He couldn't say how many families could benefit from this. Social welfare officials have been registering the displaced in evacuation centers for emergency housing assistance.

"We're going to use the lie as basis for shelter and emergency shelter assistance," Soliman said.

The logs were believed to have originated from the Cagayan River in Lanao del Sur province and carried downstream by the Iligan River in heavy rain lashed Mindanao and parts of Visayas last last week.

Lanao del Sur is part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which has its own environment secretary who did not endorse the President's Executive Order No. 23 imposing a moratorium on logging beginning Feb. 21, according to Paje.

On Mr. Aquino's instruction, seven consignated ARMM officers in charge Majir Hussican ordered a total logban in the region this week.

"That was the problem. When the President declared a total log ban, they were not told on the time to logging in ARMM was allowed, and above that, there was illegal logging," Paje told the bureau.

While past ARMM officials ignored the instruction, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) seized logs that were transported outside of the autonomous region, and at one point sealed up being dumped in court, Paje said.

He said it was Hussican's call to take to task the logging concessionaires or illegal loggers inside the ARMM.

Out of its P1.5-billion budget for the National Greening Program in 2011, the DENR released P90 million to ARMM for its reforestation program, Paje said.

"Since we're supporting the ARMM, we're demanding that the ARMM comply with the national government directive," he said. "They have their own DENR secretary. We will respect ARMM officials. We're only asking them to cooperate."

The government is targeting to reforest 1.5 million hectares of protected and open areas by 2016. In 2011, it has reforested 78,000 ha, more than double the 32,000 ha in 2010.

Widow's home served as Noah's Ark

BOBOY Mahayag (right) helped his fellow villagers flee to safety as the height of the tropical storm's fury. His house (left) is the only one left standing in Purok 7 on Bayog Island.

From the home evacuation building and the 200-seat gymnasium of Bayog Elementary School.

Seeking danger because of the heavy rains and rising waters, Bado sent the people to the second floor.

"Moments later I heard crashing sounds, and I sensed something ominous," the widower related.

She then ordered the people to evacuate to a nearby concrete house with another fatherdaughter-owned by a store worker living in Bitnan.

Bado instructed the villagers to break the window in her own room and use a rope to transfer to the other place.

Conquering fear

Rural "Boboy" Mahayag, 30, who became earlier had taken refuge in Bado's house, volunteered to lead the evacuation through a hole in the ceiling of the adjacent house with iron grills on its windows.

"I forced myself to conquer my fear. If we were not able to evacuate to the other house, surely I would be among the dead," Mahayag said.

From Bado's place, the evacuees held on to the rope handled at the other end by Mahayag, who then pushed them through the ceiling entrance.

The evacuation took some 30 minutes. When all the refugees were safely transferred, Bado, accompanied by her two children, leaped into the water.

Within minutes, the graveyard gave way, rammed into Bado's house and pushed it floating toward the sea.

As everyone was beginning to feel at ease, the strong flood current separated a drain tree from the other side of the river and slammed on the house of Bado's sister. They also noticed the water rising to knee-deep level on the second floor.

Bado then ordered that the roof over half of the house be destroyed. "I was thinking that in the event the house is carried by the waters, we can still escape through the opening," she explained.

Mercifully at daybreak, the weather was better. Bado then turned to leading the evacuees' wounds from floating debris so they evacuated.

Mahayag climbed a nearby acacia tree to bring down two young women who had sought refuge on its branches.

What used to be a bustling community the day before, Purok 7 and nearby Purok 1 are now desolate contaminated by debris and tree and electricity posts. Some 1,200 houses in the area, including the classrooms and facilities of Bayog Elementary School, were wiped out.

On Thursday, the widow reconnected to the resources how he got seemed to bid her goodbye from what used to be her ancestors before her house was swept away.

"To him, we will rebuild our house," she said. *Ryan B. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao*

Handkerchief from faith healer saved us, says woman

covering the storm disaster, reclaimed in the happiest hour the, her son and a brother survived the horrors of Ume. 16.

As floodwaters began rising in the hour lying parents of Berongay Saem Polonosa, the three scampered to the roof of their house.

And as their house was swept in the torrent, the three swam to a nearby coconut tree and held it tightly for six hours until the waters subsided.

Before they left her handkerchief to her T-shirt, and wound the other around her son's neck.

The woman said the pieces of red cloth were given by the faith healer...a school teacher known as Linda whom she had consulted when her son was ill. agonized with a terminal illness.

After regular visits to the faith healer, Belen observed that her son's conditions was improving.

According to many others who have resorted to Linda for treatment of "seemingly incurable" illnesses, the faith healer encouraged them not to forego the prescribed medications of doctors.

Upon the advice of friends, Belen asked Linda for counseling to protect her when the need arises.

She got the handkerchiefs which have hand-printed Latin "oraciles," and was told they should have them in their possession all the time and not to bring about them.

Today, Belen is awaiting the opportunity to go to church and thank Senior San Miguel, the person saint of this city for saving her life. *Ryan B. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao*

'Sendong' death toll may reach 3,000, says nat'l disaster agency

how many are still missing or that it will not be misleading. We do not know if some of those missing are among the remains that we have recovered," Ramon told reporters in Manila in a phone interview from Cagayan de Oro City.

The agriculture department estimated damage to crops at P1.63 million.

Somber air

In the evacuation centers crammed with 26,000 people in Cagayan de Oro, a mix of desperation and a subdued Christmas spirit was in the air yesterday.

For single-mother Nicol Lapuyo, there was so much to thank for. "We lost our house, our little shelter, but he is the greatest gift for this year," the 27-year-old said of her 2-week-old baby Hazil Rey.

At West City General School, dumpling Rodolfo, 66, was waiting for her son to arrive with food packs from the relief line. Marcelo's house was swept away by the rampaging flood, but nobody could snatch her from relishing with her family lessen in the evacuation center.

"We can prepare noodles, pancit or maybe we don't we can have something to eat," Rodolfo said.

Saki Imelda Lantawan, whose family was sharing a room in the school with 20 others, confessed: "It would be a great Christmas after all, with new friends we can share experiences with."

In one corner, Gene Lagapa said that despite the tragedy, there was reason to be thankful for the second chance in life.

"While others perished, we need to go on and smile and honor their memories. We must be thankful for the chance we are given because many did not have that chance," Lagapa said.

Bleak Christmas

Flora Abellanosa, 65, said celebrating Christmas in the evacuation center would give survivors a chance to "reflect on their lives, their blessings and losses, and the chances we are given and the changes we are going to make."

There are some who feel a bleak Christmas.

Flora May Abejon, 18 and seven months pregnant, was looking forward to celebrating Christmas this year with her new husband Julius Sandoval. Instead, she was busy decorating their home in Barangay Macasandig before it was inundated by the flood.

"There will be no Christmas for us here ... I do not know what we are going to do on that day," she said.

Vilma Lanarines, an evacuee in Xavier Heights in Upper Balulang, said she was thankful that her husband and her five children survived Friday's disaster.

"Our Christmas celebration will be sad because we lost our home.

It is really painful to be celebrating it in an evacuation center, but at least my family is safe," she said.

Reminder of Christ

At the flood-stricken village of Balulang, Teresita Palacio was still clearing debris in front of her house. She still could not say where and how her family would spend Christmas.

"But it will come. It serves to remind us of the sufferings of Jesus, whose birthday we are celebrating," Palacio said.

At Villa Angela Subdivision, Cornelita Sabinay could only stare at the Christmas gifts she had wrapped last week. They were now scattered on the mud-splattered floor.

The Christmas tree was in the garbage dump outside. But the lantern's still hangs in the garage.

"The Christmas tree was beyond repair, so it has to go, but not the spirit is supreme," Sabinay said. *Reports from Bobby Lagsa and Gil Portalla, Inquirer Mindanao; and Bona Z. Pambuguan and Vi Sargento in Manila*

ARMOUND Kagsaga shows with his family in a makeshift tent on Bayog Island in Digan City.

Internet users warned of scams during holidays

SAN FRANCISCO—The holiday season brings with it increased chances for online scams as internet users hunt for gift bargains and cyber crooks expand arsenals to include fake offers of irresistible deals on hot items.

According to study results released on Thursday, internet users are zealous for online scams, especially if the promised prize is a chance at a top new gadget such as a tablet computer.

In a Pokemon bathtub study backed by an internet security firm, PC Tools, more than half of those surveyed indicated they would reveal mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses or other information which they might get something for nothing.

"Even in scenarios where people realize it is too good to be true, they are falling for it," said Eric Klein, PC Tools senior manager of online strategy.

"It doesn't seem like people keep falling for it, really," Klein added.

Cyber crooks have long exploited human nature with scams relying on "social engineering" to get people to reveal secrets such as passwords or unwittingly install computer viruses.

Malicious hackers can range from telling people they will be entered in prize drawings after filling out detailed surveys or getting them to open booby-trapped files said to contain sexy or graphic imagery.

"The results found a clear difference between how aware consumers think they are of online scams and how likely they are to be taken in by these great scenarios," concluded researchers of the Pokemon bathtub.

"It is clear from the findings that the threat posed by scams is still being underestimated," they added.

Information that people fell for included offers of supposed free antivirus software to install in computers and per-click quick opportunities, according to researchers.

People were particularly susceptible to falling when given chances to win tech prizes such as mobile phone ring tones or tablet computers.

"People in the United States were, frankly, more cheap and looking for something to open out of it," Klein said.

"The idea of getting rich inside threw more likely to put security aside," he continued.

Versions of the study were also done in Australia and Britain—with Australians being unlikely to fall for ploys while British internet users were more susceptible but far more wary than those in the United States.

Strong lures

Tablet computers made particularly strong lures in all three countries, according to surveys.

"Whenever these gadgets are being hyped, they are trendy things to have," Klein said. "People interpret it as status, so they will go to great lengths to get one."

"It is really about cracking people into giving up information," he explained. "Some of the devices aren't all that alluring."

People were advised to check for secure "https" website addresses for transactions and to watch for misspellings that could signal a ruse.

Hints recommended avoiding websites with addresses in Eastern Europe, particularly Russia, due to the number of scams originating there.

"Take your time, double check what site you are on and look for hints they are not legit," he said. "Before you give out any personal details make sure it is a real offer." AFP

So how does Santa deliver all those gifts to billions of homes?

From page A9

Phoebe (six) three" (France), "Dexter (Grey, 58, XXX-lonely King, Florida)" (Serbia), "Santa, Santa's Grotto, North Pole, Lapland" (Britain), "Santa" (North Pole, Finland)" (United States).

Other people make the trip to Santa Claus Village in the Finnish town of Rovaniemi near the Arctic Circle to meet for themselves the recipient of all these December requests.

"Oh ... Santa Claus," said Mihoko Asao and his wife Chihiro, 30, who came all the way from Yamanashi, near Tokyo.

"I believe in Santa Claus a little, in my heart," he admitted, smiling as he hugged the bony, curly white beard of the lively jolly man in red.

"He's real, we believe in him!" insisted his woman Claus fan-both, 29, and Federico Puglia, 29, who came from Rome "just to see him, he's wonderful."

A surprising number of the visitors here are adults without children in tow.

For the man with the funny red fat-suit-plus a mop of white hair, whether the guests are young or old makes no difference.

"When you are my age—I'm over 400—everybody is a child," Santa told Agence France-Presse, noting that "people make big efforts to reach Rovaniemi and see me."

True believers

The youngest visitors are always truly believers.

Five-year-old Sun from Vivares, Spain, got straight to the point as he sat on Santa's lap. He pulled out a long wish list of presents with drawings and gave Santa an oral explanation in case still said to make sure he understood.

"That's a train, and that's a snowboard," Sun said in Spanish.

Next, 4-year-old Dimitri slipped forward, summoning his shyness and asking Santa boldly: "Are all the presents ready?"

An atlas in Santa's office marks some of the far-flung places from where his visitors hail, including North Korea, Mozambique, and the Pacific Islands to name just a few.

2.5 billion homes

As every year, Santa—broadens his smile—will leave Rovaniemi on Dec. 25, making his first stops in Scandinavia where children receive their presents before Santa" is present.

Then, according to a Swedish study, his Christmas Eve tour will take him to some 2.5 billion homes around the planet.

In order to make the trip on time, the report by the engineering consultancy Sweco said Santa's reindeer must travel at a speed of 5,800 kilometers per second.

This means he has only 24 microseconds at each stop to shimmy down the chimney and drop off his gifts, the study concluded.

Air resistance

Impossible, say cynics, who suggest that Santa's sleigh, weighed down with presents and traveling at supersonic speed, would encounter such massive air resistance that the entire contraption would burst into flames and vaporize almost immediately.

"But there is a trick. It's the time machine," Rovaniemi's Santa confided.

In fact, before visitors step into his office, they pass in front of a giant scale.

This, according to Santa, makes it possible to slow down the Earth's rotation to make the night of December 24th last longer. AFP

SANTA Claus receives a wish list from a boy in his office at Santa Park near Rovaniemi, Finland.

PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION ASSOCIATION

IMPEACHMENT:
INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE,
NOT TO DESTROY

The awesome power of impeachment is an instrument to preserve; not to destroy, any of the branches of government or their respective heads. Impeachment should not be the subtle tool for partisan politics, personal vendetta or hatred. It must be exercised with "extreme caution" and only in "extraordinary cases". As Justice Story put it, it is exercised for the "gravest offenses against the plain law of the land". And in the words of President Wilson, it is exercised when an act is committed "with corrupt or criminal intent." The Articles of Impeachment are a blend of doubtful legalities and conclusionary accusations, vengefully political in motivation and purpose.

After perusing the Complaint for Impeachment versus Chief Justice Renato C. Corona, and the reports attending the signing by the 188 Congressmen--accentuated by the heroic disclosures made by Cong. Toby Tiangco, the dignified and unexpected resignation of Deputy Speaker Jesse Crispin Remulla, the courageous revelations made by Cong. Jose Benjamin Benaldo that he was overcome with fear that no Pork Barrel Allocations in the amount of Seventy Million pesos (P70,000,000.00) would be given to House Members who refused to sign the Impeachment Complaint; the final censure of political bigotry in removing the morally dubitative Cong. Hermilando Mandanas, Head of the powerful Ways and Means Committee, for not signing the Impeachment Complaint, and exacerbated by the screaming silence and resentment of other timely and valiant Congressmen who were not tempted by the alluring enticement and temptation, resulting in the unorthodox haste in the filing of the Impeachment Complaint--the Philippine Constitution Association (Philcorpus) deplores and laments what transpired and expresses its strong exceptions and reservations. The obviousness and stalwart Congressmen who refused to be coerced into submission deserve to be included in the "Profiles of Courage", the book authored by President John F. Kennedy.

Had the "conscience" of the House done its research, it would have discovered that a Resolution to Impeach Justice William O. Douglas of the US Supreme Court did not materialize because the US House of Representatives did not accept the idea that the supposed contents of his decisions are an impeachable offense.

Deon Barangues, Vice-Chairman of Philcorpus, said: "The cold manner in which the House of Representatives exercised its power of impeachment is a classic example of procedural violation of due process of law and a denial of equal protection."

"Culpable violation of the Constitution" and "Betrayal of Public Trust" as grounds for impeachment must be of such gravity as to "affect the welfare or existence of the State" or subvert/undermine the systems of governance or separation of powers or "render the officer unfit for the discharge of his duties."

The Constitution "never intended to lay the judiciary thus prostrate at the feet of the House of Representatives, the slaves of their will, the victims of their caprice," Francis Hopkinson said.

In these trying times, the fate and destiny of the Filipino nation are at the doorstep of the Senate. It is looked up to as the Chamber of unstoppable independence, probity, wisdom and justice.

To the Senate under the able leadership of Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, the sovereign people lay their trust. Will the Senate meet the people's expectations?

May God grant the Senators the wisdom to discern what is legally right and morally correct.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 27 No. 19

OPINION

A meaningful Christmas

EDITORIAL

TYPHOON Pablo struck by disaster at any time is already traumatic; to experience it right before Christmas is to suffer the unkindest cut of all. For the victims and survivors of Tropical Storm "Sendong" in Mindanao, this is their cross to bear at present—having to mourn for loved ones lost and belongings devastated in the midst of a season associated in one's home with cheer and plenty everywhere, but especially in those parts, when the sight of holidays raised on the first days of October, or earols on the radio, is an inescapable reminder that the nation is once again about to ring in the longest, most spirited fiesta in its calendar.

"Maggugubalo pa naruan," has been the refrain endlessly heard from weeping survivors, their shock and pain burrowing in ever more deeply, given the proximity of their affliction to the one season in the year officially dedicated to family togetherness, joyous feasting and collective hope. Also—of giving, of reflecting the generosity and benefactence of the Saviour's entering through the exchange of gifts and the sharing of goodwill at this time of year. Nowhere, then, is Christmas as a time for compassion more meant to become palpable as the ground, rendered mugible and real, than today in Sendong's aftermath, with thousands of Filipinos in dire need of immediate succor from their countrymen.

Happily, so far, the help has been instantaneous and generous. A nation in the midst of holiday partying and consumerist excess—much of it oblivious to the approach of yet another storm that, this time, was said to be surely fully swinging lower than the recent typhoon "Pedring," which had battered Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon—awakened to scenes of hour-wrenching death and destruction in the South. Suddenly, for many, that new gadget or shiny yearend holiday didn't seem that important anymore, compared to being of help, to whatever small way one could, to fellow human beings in distress. The cash earmark for expensive gifts began going instead to donation drives for Mindanao. Lavish parties were toned down, or canceled altogether. People trooped to supermarkets not only to buy food for their noche buena table, but also provisions to be sent to their afflicted countrymen—water, clothing, blankets, medicines, toys for displaced kids, ready-to-eat supplies. Organizations big and small set up relief operations, and anyone with a modem and a Facebook or Twitter account blasted pleas for help, real-time updates, pictures and stories online.

"Filipino Facebookers, one of the biggest and most dynamic in the world, can also be a powerful force of compassion and solidarity," writes US-based journalist Benjamin Pimentel. "It became one during the 'Ondoy' disaster two years ago. It is a force once again today as the nation reels from the Sendong tragedy. It's been particularly heartening for those of us overseas... Years ago, we had to rely on e-mails, overseas newspapers, repatriate newsreels, or visitors from the homeland. Today, the information, the images, the video footage, the insights flow in real time. And so do our reactions. And our desire to help."

It will take years for the victims to rebuild their lives, and they have the nation's unconditional sympathies as they honor the memory of their lost kin and commiserate with lamentation at mute sadness—whatever grace and dignity they can summon the strength to in the face of sudden, unreasonable loss. For the rest of the nation, the usual holiday businessiveness can and should be akin to wait; now is the time for empathy and kindness—the simple, ear-felt kind that leads to a re-appreciation of what's truly vital and meaningful in our shared lives.

It's still a day before Christmas Day but the truth is, Dec. 25 came early this year to many Filipinos—perhaps without their realizing it. It came on the weekend they first heard about what had happened to their brethren in Mindanao, and right then and there decided to pitch in and help. Terrible as it is, and without diminishing the grief and agony of its victims, Sendong has inconsistent nothing less than a true season of giving, a Christmas removed to its meaningful roots. As Cagayan de Oro, Iligan and other afflicted parts of Mindanao pick up the pieces and struggle into the new year, may the country's Yuletide spirit last even longer than usual.

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'This day'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

TSO YOU know what day this is?" asked the frail, acutely-faced Dappled monk. "Don't bother me old man," snapped his fellow prisoner, Jean Pasquallini. Both were trudging toward work fields in 1941 from their prison camp north of Beijing.

It was Christmas. Incapable suddenly to withhold, the ionized the monk resisted to pray. "You're mad," he erupted.

"But I must," was the reply. "We're the only two here in whom this day means something."

"Fifteen minutes, old man. Structure, Understand?" Pasquallini hissed as the monk limped down from the ridge. Any minute a guards which could blow. Pasquallini squirmed, but only the winter wind ruffled poplars. He peered into the valley.

The monk used a fork for an altar. A tiny carved as a chalice and a flattened tin can a paten. He had fashioned wine from sacred mission grapes his undercover had sent from scrap grain. Tattered prison garb were Mass vestments.

"We have he would be shot," Pasquallini recalled for Reader's Digest years later. "Whatever it is in Christmas, [monk-spies] are best rounding narrowly in that freezing wind, holding water and wine, declaring his sermon with God."

In Christmas 2011, more people in China will "go to church than in the whole of Europe" where church attendance continues to dip, researcher Britain Investigating Group.

How many Chinese Christians are there? asked Tim Gielstra in a BBC Radio 4 program. Beijing claims 25 million. Roughly 16 million are Protestants and an million Catholics.

"This is a vast underestimate," the BBC said. A conservative figure is 40 million. Converts range from peasants in remote villages to sophisticated middle class youngsters in booming cities.

Mao Zedong described religion as "poison." The Cultural Revolution attempted to eradicate it. Yet Christianity has been tempered to survive. Still its new numbers, it spread.

In the 1980s, religious belief was again perceived, albeit with shudders. The State demanded control over Christian groups easy with state and region. "In real life, the boundaries are permeable," as the state tries to hold shepherds hostage to scatter their flocks, writes "Rocky" (the pen name of a Chinese mainland).

Americans crusade there who opt for communism with their Chase of Buick. "They feel lonely and helpless," Some are frustrated by the Western's policy of groping for a modus vivendi with the CCPA.

At the other end are those "nurtured by government ... to control the life of a diocese. They are piled with privileges. Others are coerced and some blackmailed for membership. Clandestine party members were infiltrated since seminary formation."

In between, some buckle when pressured. Perhaps, pressured bishops should wait a dispensation from the Heaven rather than confuse their people. But how do clergymen—a typical Chinese personality trait—in a psychological hostile.

Ties with the Pope are fine but not essential to the core of faith, others insist. The Second Vatican Council's drive to reform an unruly centralized papacy becomes within a socialist China center bloc in disorders. They point in 2006 plus dissident theorists priests who signed a "Pledge of Disobedience."

Others split holes. The Pope can be ignored, if one has "proportionate reasons." Like what? Like opening a new diocese, building a larger convent, even a volunteer to proclaim the gospel.

"Speak human words to humans and ghosts by words to ghosts" is a Chinese proverb. It morphs into an excuse that cuts justly issues.

"I think it is very natural that many other people will not be satisfied," professor Fu Tieneng in this new bishop of Hebei, that is flawed by the BBC. "They need some reasons for their lives. When Christianity falls into their lives, they will seem it very rightly."

Pasquallini summed up Fu's insights after the Trappist monk's underground Mass. "Merry Christmas, Christmas Day," he said. The monk smiled back: "Jean, Merry Christmas."

* * *

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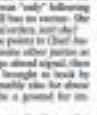
Soft underbelly of the Supreme Court

GET REAL



Solita Collas-Monsod

ONE WOULD have thought that with the arrest and incarceration of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the ruckus of Justice Secretary Leila de Lima's defiance of its temporary restraining order (TRO) on Arroyo's travel ban would be appreciated by the Supreme Court's members.

But that doesn't seem to be the case (pardon the pun) at all. From the opinions uploaded three days ago on the Court's website, the justices seem to be more interested in engaging each other in what looks like an all-out war, the niceties be damned, with regard to the issue surrounding that TRO.

The spillover effects of such a battle among the giants, as we speak, can be considered collateral damage—as anyone—was among the lot of civil are exposed may be considered a negative by those who want to hide it, but it is certainly a positive to those who want to boost faith in/trust in the institution and its processes, judge for yourself.

Five opinions were uploaded on the website, all regarding the Arroyo-De Lima brouhaha. Justice Antonio Carpio and Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno each have a dissenting opinion, Justice Arturo Brion has a concurring opinion, Justice Mariano del Castillo has a concurring opinion, but with a separate opinion, while Justice Roberto Abad has a concurring opinion, but qualifies the decision/resolution itself—about which those justices dissented, concurred or had a separate opinion—was actually the ponencia. If this is an oversight, it certainly does not reflect well on the efficiency of the administration of the Court.

If you have neither the time nor the inclination to read the opinions, let me give you some of what I consider glimpses into the soft underbelly of the Court's penumbrae:

Item: Carpio's dissent points out that the TRO was "actually issued and released to petitioner Arroyo at 8:00 o'clock in the evening of 25 November 2011, even before petitioners' compliance with the first two conditions. Petitioners posted the P5 million bond and submitted their respective special powers of attorney at 10:40 o'clock in the evening of 25 November 2011."

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Christmas thoughts

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

THE PEOPLE'S Christmas gift. The first report from the Social Weather Stations' survey of Dec. 3-7, 2011, released yesterday in Inquirer.net, just three months after President Aquino at 71 percent, and three months before that at 72 percent, the 4-point net satisfaction rating of +58, or two points away from 3-Metzul September.

In the country's public confidence, Chief Justice Renato Corona, with +34 in December, +19 in September, and +36 in March.

Pilipinas Total Intelligence Inc.,

LETTERS

Youth can choose to reject the system

THE 2012 national budget has been signed by Pesidena Aquino. It has been heavily criticized for misrepresenting the concept of social services by concentrating on dole-out and politicized recommendations instead of economic reforms and support. It has been ratified in record time, at the expense of comprehensive public scrutiny and participatory governance.

For this budget cycle, the Executive of the Philippines' administration has acted in more consistent and more evasive ways to protect their subsidy. Where the administration proposed P1.9 billion for the 2012 budget, Office of Health received only half from congress to justify every item in the account. Chancellors of every SU state were present in congressional budget hearings.

The condition, unfortunately included from administrative deviation making, have been unserve in campaigning for an adequate DP budget, from every corollary to the larger institution responsible and accountable education.

Last campaign's strike achieved many goals: re-established our ranks, gained national attention, supported public debate, influenced media and public agenda and compared support of supporters—students, employees, faculty members, parents and citizens, just now.

Although the only product of our campaign resulted to bring a P200 million increase in the DP budget, we count all those in solidarity to our grassroots and mass participation and organization.

Here comes really we are quarrel learning. All those build on issues in participatory governance and responsive policymaking in social enhancement and social justice. As we broaden participation and widen our goals, we stand accountable. We see the DP budget only as a means to an end: after all, a democratic, scientific and mass-oriented education requires government national and industrial development.

Perhaps among the most important things our history must remember our mass movement for democracy. The very things we need to do in order to guarantee a democratic space for the mass participation, a climate conducive to serious "What is it that we need to tell in order to be heard? Why do we need to beg for our rights? Why are we taught to think and act in this, but then told to do things the 'tried and tested' way? Why do we work to live, instead of the other way around? Instead of obsessive idealism, this system has only showed the benefits of our society in terms of those who do not need it, or deserve it.

The youth of today refuse to submit themselves to be seen as commodities, to patronizing social services and in promoting the interests of the elite, to other countries abroad, the Oligarchy and transnational corporations that exploit against social and economic inequality for a productive society rethinking and ranking of social structure and processes.

We pledge to organize and to improve on our philosophy in the Philippines.

We are the real in make this world not only home, but home for all of us.

—KRISTOFFER L. O'Pendleton-cyrus, kristoffer.o@gmail.com

Excessive pay and bonuses now a thing of the past

THIS IS in reaction to the news article titled "MWSS still giving big bonuses...GOCC" (Inquirer, 12/15/11).

We find it odd that the Commission on Audit (COA) would issue a report on supposedly excessive expenses of a reputed office of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS). This is not true. The MWSS does not have regional offices. The report obviously referred to statements made by President Aquino during his 2010 State of the Nation Address. Those statements have long been addressed by the present MWSS administration.

Also, the headline seems to say that the MWSS administration has not changed its ways when in fact it has. Since I assumed office as MWSS administrator on July 31, 2011, we have addressed the issue of outrageous collective and bonuses by renaming them benefits and salaries without reducing their equivalents.

Even before the GOCC bill was signed, we had cut down the frequency of board meetings from four times a month to only once a month and replaced the board of trustees with professionals of unquestionable integrity whose qualifications match the development program requirements of the agency.

To make a 20-year concession deal more viable and win Wall million in added benefits to interest employees. This is on top of the P6.03 billion paid in retirement benefits in more than 2,000 employees since the privatization of our distribution services in 1997, in accordance with our Early Retirement and Incentive Package.

We reduced our operating expenses by 5 percent, from P2.3 billion in 2010 to P2.2 billion in 2011, owing to increased office productivity. We increased our revenues by 21 percent, from P2.3 billion in 2010 to P2.8 billion in 2011, owing to increases in lower and low water collections. We also recovered our net income by 2,000 percent, to a P20 million in 2010 to P900 million in 2011.

We have successfully completed and President Aquino's mandate to lay open, transparent and honest in managing MWSS operations. A three-page note in the Inquirer even depicted the MWSS as having been transformed "from whipping boy to poster boy" of the Aquino administration in an ad for private interpreters to government and campaign against corruption.

—GERARDO J. ESQUIVEL, administrator, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System

Corona impeachment a cleansing of PH soul

"PBN 15, in response to Napoleon Tajlan's article titled "Hernando Ramirez case of culture" (Business, 12/15/11). It is really laughable that Tajlan can be so intellectually dishonest in his analysis of events surrounding the impeachment of Chief Justice Renato Corona. To a critical observer, like a first-time visitor to the Philippines, Tajlan's devious would convince them that graft, deceit are pervading the country was the edge. However, to the vast majority of Filipinos who actually live here, the impeachment of Corona is actually cathartic—literally a cleansing of the national soul.

Tajlan says that the case against President Aquino's assistant are pathetic. That the opposition have used coercive manner of getting the impeachment through Congress votes not cited. But we are loath to tell he, anyone anyway and political maneuverings that stretch the boundaries are hardly new. Tajlan can call against similar forces in the impeachment process, but silence was his constant when former President Joseph Estrada's allies used similar methods to get through Congress?

Tajlan wags his finger at the majority of congressmen to sign the impeachment complaint, but what about the brown paper bag controversy cash for Corona signed at two Malacañang meetings? Tajlan also criticizes the President's questionable income from the chairmanship of the party in his deeply stated income picture. And the emphasis and consistently declared assets seems to be what Tajlan finds very disagreeable.

In Tajlan's analysis, the underlying reason we cannot Corona a financial criminal or good. Is he, the impeachment is only a Machiavellian plot to populate the Supreme Court with friendly justices who will overturn recent decisions regarding Hacienda Luisita, thus securing the wealth of the Aquino clan. Using this logic, Tajlan has subjected several things that will be, impressive and makes the impeachment of Corona perfect sense, the Supreme Court justices impeached and/or complained to refute appointees. Second, Supreme Court decisions are not final and can be reversed in favor of the appointee by his/her appointees. Lastly, the current Supreme Court is totally anti-Aquino Court.

Like the majority of Filipinos, perhaps Tajlan is cynical and has long been disappointed with the sad state of our nation's politics. We can no longer look at our leaders and see exigents committed to ultimate delivery. Time seems to have come to an end to the era of impunity and corruption is on the run. On the other hand, Filipinos have access to the internet and other formulas reading. The best way to counter the one where the false breaks through the plasters of lackeys and finally weakens the will here. The current impeachment may not have a cathartic happy ending, but that situation is far from and we can only hope that we have all witnessed the beginning of a new era.

—ROLAND GUEVARA, rolandgueva@yahoo.com

Republic of the Philippines
CAGAYAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Tuguegarao City

NOTICE OF SEARCH FOR PRESIDENCY

The Board of Regents of the Cagayan State University (CSU), formerly and publicly announces that the search for the next President of CSU is now open.

Minimum Qualifications:

Applicants for CSU Presidency must possess the following minimum qualifications:

1. Must be at least forty five (45) years old but not more than sixty one (61) years old at the time of appointment;
2. Must be a holder of Master's degree;
3. Must be a holder of an earned Doctorate degree from a recognized higher education institution;
4. Must have a proven track record as an administrator (such as President, Vice President, College Administrator, Campus Administrator, Director of a research center, Chairman of a department, or its equivalent) in a state university or college for at least five (5) years. This must be supported by documentary evidence. A track record of at least five (5) years in the academic profession and/or administrative experience and the relevant subject matter expertise;
5. Must not be related within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity to any incumbent member of the governing board, officer or employee of the university;
6. Must not have been convicted of any administrative offense or of any crime involving moral turpitude.

Documentary Requirements:

Interested applicants must submit one (1) set of original and six (6) duplicate copies of the following documents to the Secretariat of the Search Committee:

1. Formal application letter addressed to the CHED Chairman, Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan;
2. Detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV), notarized;
3. Certified true copies of transcripts of records for the doctorate degree;
4. Authentic and updated Client Masterlist and Development Status of the University;
5. Certification/clearance from the following government agencies, obtained within the last three (3) months from the date of filing of application: (Applicants may submit their clearance or authorize the appointing authority to secure the clearance on their behalf)
   - Ombudsman
   - Office of the Solicitor General (OSG)
   - Civil Service Commission (CSC)
   - Sandiganbayan (Presiding Justice or Clerk of Court)
   - Municipal Regional Trial Court
   - Individual Taxpayers who is required to submit his clearance)
6. Duly accomplished CSC Form 212, notarized;
7. NBI Clearance dated NOT OLDER than six (6) months;
8. Personal data sheet (Civil Service Form) covering a period not less than ten (10) years immediately preceding the date of filing of application, which shall be the basis for the qualification evaluation of the applicant;
9. Results of Board Examination, if applicable, including a duplicate copy of the commissioner's record of examination results indicating scores for every subject taken, where the applicant is currently employed.

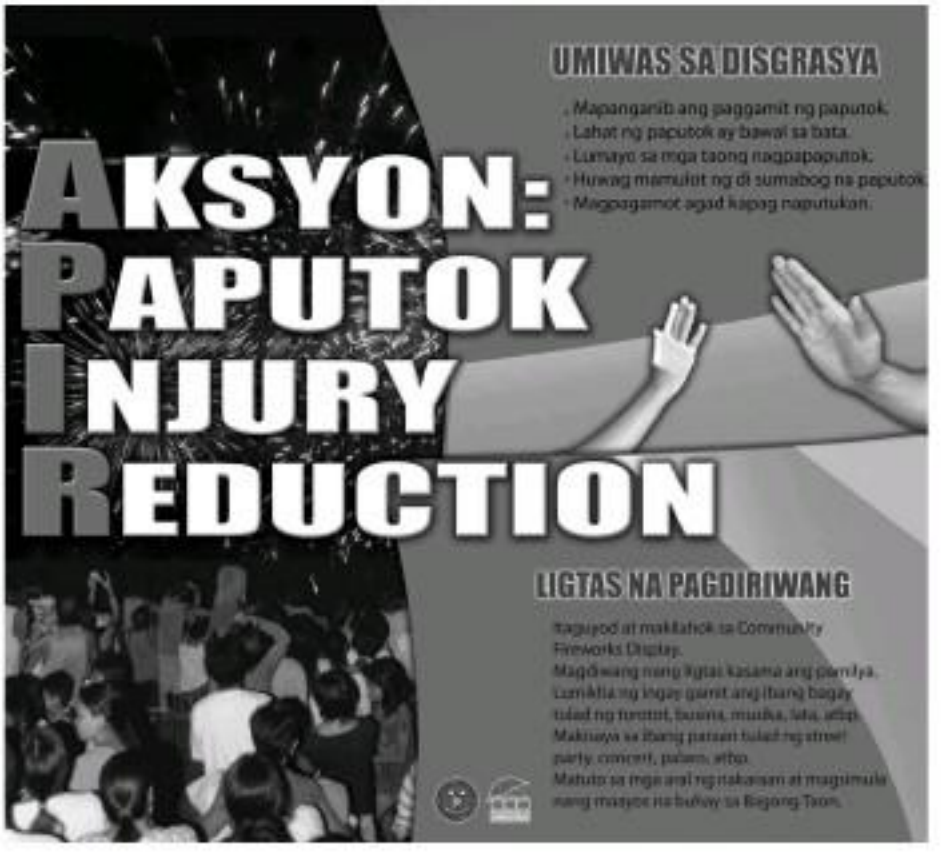
Important: Interested applicants must submit their above mentioned documentary requirements together with application letter on or before January 25, 2012, 5:00 p.m. to either of the following:

Dean, Bruce S. Madrid
Chair, CSU Board of Regents
Commission on Higher Education
HEDC Bldg., C.P. Garcia Ave.
U.P. Diliman, Quezon City

Presidential Search Panel
Chair, Chanrobles Committee
Tuguegarao City

Mrs. Ma. Imelda S. Deles
Executive Secretary
OP/MO

Mr. Francis Ng. Escudero
Senate President
Congress Bldg., Quezon City
Tuguegarao City



We had been warned of Cagayan River's fury

Pamanga Ad

COUNTLESS dead and demolished homes were all that Tropical Storm "Sendong" left on both banks of the Cagayan River. YOUSSEF CABRERA

days of incessant rain. Many parts of the town had to be evacuated by small boats. Historical documents say there was a typhoon that also ravaged the Mindanao bordering the mountain plateau beyond, known today as Bukidnon province.

I grew up with the Cagayan River (and Cagayan de Oro River; the "de Oro" is a recent appendage to the place named Cagayan and is not necessarily translatable to the more apparent river's name).

The street that lined the bank was the main street of Iligan town that was founded in 1639 by Augustinian friarsfrom Iloilo (Hiligaynong and the Portuguese to Recollect, Fray Agustin de San Pedro. In the Hispanic era up until the early American years, the street was known as Carretera de la Iglesia because it led to the river where the bells for the Augustinian Recollects in 1845.

Most of the old families of Cagayan de Misamis built their houses on this street, later renamed Calle Rotger. Except for one, Dr. Fayet-Rio-Claro house, all those huge and huge bilal houses are now gone, burned and bombed by the invading Japanese on May 3, 1942.

Strep shark

The Cagayan River was truly the center of my childhood universe. I was only three years old when I almost drowned in an inlet that of Roberto Margarito Corrales y Reta, a native of my paternal grandmother, according to death on June 10, 1875, after being bitten by a shark that had strayed into the river.

That should give no one idea love deep this great river was. In Spanish-era maps, it was marked as navigable.

It was here that the trading boats of rich Cagayan merchants—Tiroy Nicy y Roa and his cousin-in-law Mariano Roa, Ramon Chanlee, and the wealthy bachelor Jose Roa y Cases (also because Emilio Aguinaldo's first Filipino governor of Misamis in 1899)—docked and unloaded their goods in the afternoons, or stores stocked with imported goods from the Manila.

Roman Chanlee and his family lived on the second floor of a huge house; the ground floor was for storage that later the sign "La Fortuna de Nuestra Quinta."

It was in the riverbank that, in 1902, a Chinese lamb unloaded its cargo of red bricks for the new house being built by his figos. The house is still standing at the business Calle del Mar that leads to the sea. It now bears a marker that the National Historical Commission installed in 2000, declaring the building "as created for justification in the Philippine-American War of 1900."

So indelible was the river's influence on the culture of the town that the first class, in which both my parents belonged, was founded here—the "first of Iligan" (who lived downstream) and the "Sea of Balsar" (who lived on higher ground).

My father descended from the former, and from the latter came my maternal grandfather, Juan Ros, who became governor of the old district of Misamis.

Homes de Cagayan, today Xavier University, stine from the former; its original campus on the Cotabato side the unive-

sity houses drowned in the first typhoon, Santiago Bayes, S.J., by Dolina Sins and his cousin-with Conchita Roa Sua.

The time has come

Many times as a child, I anticipated the river could either a heavy rain, but just enough to spill into our property line. Over many periods, I rose to the time, however, they were surprised when they were apparently mobilized to make coffee. They thought it was ha-ha-ya.

But when they learned the devastating floods unleased by Tropical Storm "Sendong" on the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan they put their houses in their minds to fulfill a massive need for the over a thousand fatalities of the disaster.

For four straight days, 30 parishioners at the facility, at Barangay Sun Juse in Pagalungan City put together 300 coffins which Gov. Antonio Cirilles delivered on Wednesday to Iligan.

It was the first time coffins were made there and the drought not only caused the insurance but also brought back and memories.

Emilio Parreno, 61, tried to control his emotions as he hammered nails on his carousel assignment.

"My heart was breaking while I was making the coffin," said Parreno, who is serving restaurant for double months.

Gift to the dead

Parreno said he had relatives in Parreno Street at Barangay Tuburan in Iligan. He didn't know if any of them were among those who were hundreds killed in his hometown, but nevertheless said, "This is for each Christian gift I can give to them," he said.

"The thought of giving to them in wood packed one to the job was or three coffins," he added.

What the river did was to simply reclaim its old course. That should have been predictable.

Cagayan de Oro is typhoon or typhoonas. I myself do not know what it feels to be in a typhoon. Perhaps that is the reason for the complacency.

Today's Cagayan de Oro would unlike by ages ago because creating a burgeoning metropolis with over a million people on weekends. That will continue to grow with the expansion of Xavier Land's Greater mall, hotel, and condo tower complex, and the opening of Pasco del Rio mall, convention center and Riviera Hotel high-rise of the general Cagayan de Oro Justice, Rodolfo Pelaez Pelaez.

The latter houses lies in the outplanned and unmatched mix of rapid urban progress and inept local governance that has not kept up with the global standards of sustainable urban living. Despite its touted growth, Cagayan de Oro remains a "backside" city where the money tolerance is pocket-pothed and non-existent public transport system that is the bane of its traffic-choked roads.

It is a lesson in not having foresight of priorities. The reason claims he is prepare, and hence cannot remove the city's dependence on the power system and the informal settlers who he sometimes allows to occupy our lanes of seasonal roads.

That is a tragic policy: a city government that encourages informal settlers colonized to such zones. The objective is done votes for the next elections.

Understanding the river

To know the Cagayan River is to understand its very name and the characteristics of the terrain on which it meanders.

The name "Cagayan" was acquired even before the coming of the Spaniards in 1622. As early as the 1500s, the river was already known as Cagayan in official documents.

One Moluccan suggested geographical belonging. The river had exactly the same features as the Cagayan River of Luzon.

Indeed, during the early Hispanic years, the place was known as "Cagayan de duro" (Little Cagayan), to distinguish it from El Rio Grande de Cagayan in northern Luzon. And like its geographical counterpart, the river climbs its way to the sea through scenic vertical limestone cliffs and forests.

When it nurses the city, it becomes languid and quiet, but deep.

But typhoons, the Cagayan River watches drains slope with an estimated 3,083 million cubic meters of rainfall annually, making it one of the eight major river basin systems of Mindanao. And it watches to encompass an 1,321 square kilometers of mountainous terrain. It originates only 60 sq km of level area.

That is why it is also the city's main recreation resource because it moves down slope at a fast velocity, its water creates whirlpools rapids or outside for white water rafting—a cultural trait new all rivers exhibit.

But there is one more thing to understand. The Cagayan River is no ravenous river that has no headwaters, unlike the Pulangi or the Rio Grande de Mindanao. It actually moves as drainage for three other rivers, all huge tributaries, up to the Bukidnon mountains. All three rivers are themselves catch basins of rainwater.

Environmental Secretary Ramon Paje is right. And this old piece of public information is ecologic and timely in many of us. It is incredible that millions of local leaders have not paved over it. This is a serious sin of omission.

Clear warnings

On Dec. 15, it was already tested in its public warnings since the tremendous of the incoming Tropical Storm "Sendong" (international name: Washi).

That evening, public storm signals were already issued. Mercedes Oliveros would be under Signal No. 2. And as always, there are many complaints of the appropriate time the storm would make landfall in the eastern Mindanao coast.

But Mayor Emano now says he did not know about the track. How could that be?

The storm, as recorded now had intensified, Dec. 16 started with downpour skies. Slow and constant rains soon appeared, continuing for the rest of the day. Sendong was scheduled to hit Cagayan de Oro very late at night.

I must admit that I was excited to experience my first big storm. By 10 to 11 that night, the wind began to howl. This went on until midnight and beyond. My water note in the eye of the storm.

Then my excitement was lated. The windshield not appear to be of the over-and-dogs variety; it came in steady sudden, disjointed, then resumed. It was unnerved for the rest of the night.

The hotel power company ran and cut the electricity. Sleeping in the dark, one could not help but listen to the curious, one mind and the sound of the rainfall. Nothing exciting or confidanding.

But the Cagayan River, a drainage river with a known identity, itself, is not to be judged that way.

Unknown to us, the rainfall over at the Bukidnon side was gruesome. That rainfall had to naturally settle in its catch basin, and what a mammoth basin it was and not to be.

That night, dams of Dec. 17, Macajalar Bay was on high alert in all low-lying areas and elsewhere in the city, people were asleep in the dark. The conditions were lethal. The rest is now history.

Where was Ensure?

Sendong was already a household name, as announced by Pagasa, as early as Dec. 15. Will it is on record that the mayor never conveyed the City Disaster Risk Reduction Council, basically there was ample time for it. But again he says he did not know of the warnings.

Where was Ensure in the night Sendong hit Cagayan de Oro?

Ensure itself was not without its dire warnings. In January 2000, the Cagayan River overflowed its intended watercourse and also drained lives. That catastrophe is not seen as lesson.

And yet the city government allowed the informal settlers to mushroom. It had enough time to design a functioning relocation program for its hard to manage at what was touted as a program housing resettlement was to attend to controversy settled unsupported funds.

That when we learned. But there was a shortage of coffins and homicide, we immediately started all our organizations here, including the LGU, to produce coffins and deliver it to the nearest city, Iligan," said the Zamboanga del Sur governor.

Talent put to use

Bernard Hidalgo, Jayson vice president for Mission Mindanao and legal officer of The provincial government, said other shoppers were tapped to provide the materials for the coffins.

"Most of our prisoners are talented in carpentry and handicraft," Mahonson said.

"We made sure that those who worked were known for their good behavior. It was difficult because we have requested them to work outside their specific cells for four days," he said.

"We were told that we will be allowed to leave our cells to make coffins for four days. So though the coffins were for us," Mahonson said.

Hayfid as it may sound, for Casimalo and Parreno—the coffins were "the best Christmas gifts we can give."

Zamboanga convicts make their best Christmas gift ever

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Inmates at the Zamboanga del Sur Provincial Jail are now hard to spend carpentry work in December making Christmas decorations.

This time, however, they were surprised when they were apparently mobilized to make coffins. They thought it was ha-ha-ya.

But when they learned the devastating floods unleased by Tropical Storm "Sendong" on the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan they put their houses in their minds to fulfill a massive need for the over a thousand fatalities of the disaster.

For four straight days, 30 prisoners at the facility, at Barangay Sun Juse in Pagalungan City put together 300 coffins which Gov. Antonio Cirilles delivered on Wednesday to Iligan.

It was the first time coffins were made there and the drought not only caused the insurance but also brought back and memories.

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"My heart was breaking while I was making the coffin," said Parreno, who is serving restaurant for double months.

Gift to the dead

Parreno said he had relatives in Parreno Street at Barangay Tuburan in Iligan. He didn't know if any of them were among those who were hundreds killed in his hometown, but nevertheless said, "This is for each Christian gift I can give to them," he said.

"The thought of giving to them in wood packed one to the job was or three coffins," he added.

"It pained me to see what happened to the children, to the elderly who were not able to survive," said Mercedes Gracedo, another inmate-worker.

He said after capsules of dead children outnumbed him of his own child.

"I really miss my little one," he said.

Traditionally, prisoners make Christmas decorations, banners and ornaments, sew uniform.

Gordon said December with local officials and lawyers members were focused on rebuilding useful help, food stuff and relief assistance for the flood victims.

"Our prisoners are talented in carpentry so they can help us," Gordon said.

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Across the NATION

Fire hits Cebu mall, displaces 1,500

FIREFIGHTERS try to break the window glass (above) during the early morning fire in Gaisano Capital on the corner of Leon Kilat and Leon Street.

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Chito Aragon
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Around 1,500 workers face a bleak Christmas as the downtown shopping mall where they worked was gutted by fire early Friday.

It took firefighters over 12 hours to contain the fire that hit Gaisano Capital Mabolo located at the corner of Leon Kilat and Gorordo Avenue in Cebu City.

The fire broke out at 12:42 a.m. on the second floor of the eight-story building. The fire alarm was raised to Task Force Rescue at 1:31 a.m., and 9:02 a.m. Fire Marshal Senior Inspector Eddie Enriquez, owner of the Gaisano Capital Group, was "very devastated," said Fire Labrador, the fire's liaison officer.

The blaze in Cebu was used as the corporate office of the Gaisano Capital, which has 17 branches nationwide.

Labrador said that based on initial report, there was a spark from the engine room, where the generator was placed, on the second floor before the fire broke out.

He said no one was inside the building at that time although there were six security guards assigned outside the mall.

The firefighters failed to control the fire immediately because they did not have any breathing apparatus and their ladder truck was too short for the eight-story building.

At of 3 p.m. Friday, firefighters from Cebu City and nearby areas were still conducting fire-fighting operations although the fire had been contained.

At first, the firefighters could not get inside the building because the smoke was so thick. The smoke became unbearable past 8 a.m., allowing the firemen to get inside and fight the fire at the first and second floors.

But the fire had already spread to the upper floors, which was still difficult to pinpoint because of the heavy smoke. The lack of boom ladders also hampered the firefighting efforts.

The firemen had to work to douse because thirty-only had 34 breathing apparatus available. Replenishing the oxygen tanks took 30 minutes before another batch of firemen could enter the building again.

Cebu City Mayor Michael Rama closed down a portion of Cebu Street—from Osmeña Boulevard to corner Leon Kilat Street—and part of Leon Kilat Street, from Cebu to Sinsuyong Streets, to allow the fire trucks to use the roads.

Most of the nearby shops were closed because the electricity was cut off.

A Multiwealth's outlet across the burning building used a generator set to continue operations but it overheated and exploded. Fire broke out but was immediately put out by the firemen who were across the street.

Labrador said the shopping mall had around 1,500 workers who might be displaced two days before Christmas. These include sales and office personnel, security guards and utility workers, both direct hire and agency-hired, he added.

Forensic team holds postmortems in hangar

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The unclaimed bodies of seven victims earlier dumped in a sanitary landfill are now in a hangar at Lumbia Airport here.

Dr. Wilfredo Torres, leader of the Disaster Victim Identification of the National Bureau of Investigation, on Wednesday said they have transferred the bodies to a hangar owned by the National Power Corp.

The hangar was also where the remains of the Cebu Pacific air crash in 1998 were identified.

Torres earlier said it was the first time for his group of forensic experts to examine the remains of victims in a garbage dump.

The forensic team, which arrived Monday afternoon, had to work in the middle of the garbage pile still emitting to protect them from the heat of the sun except for several torpedo trucks. Aside from the stench of the decomposing bodies, they also have to deal with the overpowering stench of garbage.

Mayor's decision

The bodies had piled up in the city's funeral homes. Mayor Vicente Emano ordered the transfer of the bodies to the landfill area, a decision met with outrage, accusing the mayor of disrespecting the dead.

Emano said he did not have a choice but to transfer the bodies to the landfill as people were already complaining of the stench and that relatives of the victims were requesting for a mass burial.

At least 50 bodies were brought to the landfill.

The forensic experts hoped to finish with the examination of the bodies yesterday. That is, if the bodies stop piling up.

Postmortem

Torres said as of 3 p.m. Wednesday, 13 bodies have been buried in a shallow grave at the Holocaust Peñida Cemetery.

The 13 bodies were tagged and placed in body bags after undergoing postmortem identification, which involved the actual fingerprinting, collection of DNA samples and dental identification. The victim's clothing and body tattoos were also examined.

Torres said his team was having difficulty with the fingerprinting of the bodies because the skin has started to peel off.

Torres said his team of experts are the same team who did the actual collection and identification of the victims of SW Drilling of the Zhen, a dripping vessel which sank off the coast of Bonbon in 2006. Cai Pamilio, Inquirer Mindanao

PEACE KIDS
Children of Barangay Sinon in Lanao del Norte flash the sign of peace, an expression of high hopes for a lasting peace in the conflict-ridden town.

Baguio residents want solution to John Hay debts

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Why can't the Aquino administration force the developer of Camp John Hay to finally pay its P2.5-billion debts to the city government?

Several Baguio residents asked that question on Monday at a breakfast meeting organized by the Baguio Convention and Development Authority.

Key city officials, the reps of Acmel Dickson Cimatu, BCDA president, was a general statement: "First assured we will collect those debts."

Cimatu and Dr. Jaime Elvino Aglugub, president of John Hay Management Corp., supported the meeting's objective to help city officials and old Baguio families about 2012 projects lined up for Camp John Hay and other BCDA-administered special economic zones.

But Cimatu's confirmation about the debts from the Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevcor) puzzled some residents and offended others. CJHDevcor is operated by real estate giant SM Prime. Both chaired by Robert John Sobrepeña.

Michael Bonoan, a former commissioner of the Baguio Centennial Commission, told Baguio people had turned the same statement before. He said they feared the BCDA because the agency's previous officials had not been transparent about the deals involving Camp John Hay and might have even protected the developer.

BCDA general counsel Atty. Paul Rivero later held reporters that Cimatucan was not to keep details of government's plans for CJHDevcor under the lid as a legal strategy.

He said Sobrepeña's lawyers had become their predecessors in the panels with legal assessments.

On Friday, CJHDevcor said in a statement that it would continue suspending payment of could obligations to BCDA "until government complies with its contract."

Sobrepeña began developing the former Americans out-and-out lease hotel during the term of President Fidel Ramos in 1994. He was able to exercise BCDA officials under the term of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to renew the John Hay lease and end all its debt-issues in 2009.

The July 1, 2008, amendatory lease allowed CJHDevcor to sign area developed property to make up for its outstanding obligations. But the developer held back payments again from October 2009 until this year allegedly over unfulfilled government obligations.

In the Friday statement, CJHDevcor president Redmond Santos said the retroactive contract compelled the BCDA to create a One-Stop Action Center (OSAC), which would provide all of the developer's permits and licensing requirements.

The CJHDevcor statement said unless the government signed the amendatory deal, it had accepted "several subsequent concessions, including the remittance of "future annual obligations" amounting to more than P2.09 billion and interest accrued of P1.08 million."

Complying with the Ong would "enable [the developer] to meet these immediate financial obligations," the statement said.

The BCDA said it had set up the Ong.

But according to the CJHDevcor statement, "Up to the present day, there is still no fully functional Ong, and the much-needed permits and licenses still remain to be issued within 30 days as promised."

Santos urged the BCDA "to ensure the approval of all the applications currently pending and to conduct [within five days]."

BCDA lawyers admitted that the government was forced to negotiate a restructured deal with CJHDevcor because of a 2003 Supreme Court decision that nullified the last real estate deal between the John Hay Special Economic Zone.

Congress had to amend Republic Act No. 7227 (the 1992 BCDA law), with RA 9400 in 2007, to reinstate the tax incentives of the zones in John Hay, Clark, Freeport, the Bataan Technopark and Poro Point Special Economic Zone.

Last week, Cimatu turned down a CJHDevcor settlement offer for its arrears.

Rivero said the settlement offer was fundamental to stalling a second John Hay restructured contract "which was no longer acceptable to the current administration." He said the settlement offer would have led CJHDevcor to pay the debt by issuing as new to million peso treasury bonds.

Reds declare 14-day ceasefire for calamity areas

ILIGAN CITY—Communist rebels in Northern Mindanao have declared a "regional ceasefire" from Dec. 23 to Jan. 3, 2012, in deference to the victims of the calamity caused by Tropical Storm "Sendong."

The ceasefire declaration handed down on Dec. 19 by the Communist Party of the Philippines' North Central Mindanao Regional Committee is on top of the one covering the communist forces throughout the country, which a statement signed by regional CPP spokesperson Noreen Mangubat.

Earlier, the CPP-created leadership declared a two-schedule Yuletide truce—one from Dec. 24-26 and the other from Dec. 31 to Jan. 2.

The CPP also encouraged New People's Army (NPA) units "in the most affected areas to temporarily cease offensive military operations and help to unclutching the people to carry out rescue and rehabilitation efforts to help the victims recover from the disaster."

Mangubat said the regional committee counts all leaders and members of the NPA in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan, and the provinces of Misamis Oriental, Bukidnon and Lanao del Norte.

"In particular, the NPA is to suspend offensive actions against military detachments, camps and outposts, including police stations and outposts," Mangubat said.

Mangubat said, however, the NPA "will remain vigilant against enemy attacks," he further said.

Mangubat also clarified that "all police actions launched by the NPA against criminals, including murderers, rapists, drug dealers, thieves and others should not be included in the scope of the suspension."

The rebel spokesperson said they would raise resources for relief and rehabilitation efforts of the affected families out of "all essential and financial donations for the Christmas season and the Party's solid organizational collection [on Dec. 26]" that the CPP's regional boards would receive.

"All essential donations yet to be received by the party should be used for the same purpose," Mangubat said.

In a separate statement, Iligan City Mayor Lawrence Siao, spokesperson of the Northern Mindanao Peace in Mindanao, said the rebel leadership has directed its local and regional commanders "to observe [right-] and simplicity" in holding the CPP anniversary on Dec. 26 in sympathy with the survivors and victims of flooding.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) also extended its sympathies to Sendong's victims.

"In the spirit of humanity and as fellow members of this disease, the MILF sincerely offers sympathy and condolence to those who suffer from this calamity," said a statement from Muhammad Ameen, chief of the MILF secretariat, in behalf of the central leadership. Ryan D. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao

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ANTIQUE MINING

Mayor plays small-, large-scale cards

By Hector P. Borgas Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

(First of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

HEAVY equipment being used in the building of an access road leading to mining sites in Barangay San Roque in Libertad town, Antique. [illegible]

LIBERTAD, Antique—Milagros Tandoanog, 76, still remembers when her parents and great grandparents taught her and her siblings when they were young. "If the trees were cut and the mountains leveled, we will eventually run out of water," she said.

From her home in Barangay San Roque here, she looked at the lush forest canopy of Mount Hinapo and shook her head. "These mountains are dear to us because we depend on the river and it too for our food and livelihood."

For the past several months, [illegible] and other villagers have noticed mining activities being carried out by a miner and his wife from Iloilo, and another person in San Roque, reported to Mt. Hinapo.

On Oct. 5, Gov. Exequiel Javier issued small-scale mining permits to Mayor Jose Delmarco of Pont City in Iloilo, his wife Jinky, and Teodoro Lariega. Each applicant is allowed to extract 75,000 tonnes more of less per year, or a total of 210,000 MT, yearly in San Roque.

The permits cover a total area of 9.17 hectares—14.96 ha for Delmarco, 12.71 ha for his wife, and 18.44 ha for Lariega. These are good for two years and can be renewable for two more years.

Mayor Palmares has shared concerns that the mining operations will severely affect some near the site. "We have complied with all requirements and followed laws and procedures. If we have violated anything, we will stop our operations and government agencies will not allow us to proceed," he said.

He pointed out that the papers were granted as environment certificate of compliance (ECC) to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) regional office, an agency under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The ECC, issued by Oscar Estanislao, acting EMB regional director, on April 16, 2010, prescribed a manual mode of mining through the use of picks, mattocks, iron bars, shovels and other manual tools. But Estanislao amended it on Aug. 24 to include heavy equipment, such as a ballclider, two backhoes and a payloader, hauling trucks and a compressor.

Under the People's Small-scale Mining Act of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7076), small-scale mining covers an area of not more than 20 ha and restricts activities to "those relying heavily on manual labor using simple implements and methods and do not use explosives or heavy mining equipment."

Filipinas Francis Gonga, secretary of the Antique-based Regional Foundation, and other critics of the project, say small-scale mining operations are actually large-scale mining projects.

The San Roque area are actually part of a 1,270.9709-ha area that is the subject of a pending application for an exploration permit (EP) filed by Antiquean Mines Corp. (AMC) on Aug. 14, 2006, documents from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) showed.

According to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), AMC was formed on July 24, 2006, with Mayor Delmarco as president, and his wife, Lorelei, Charlie Chua, Rebecca Pandoloy and Leo Buenaventura as officers and incorporators.

The EP application covers San Roque and Barangay Poto in Libertad and Barangays Labod-Bayang, Bayang, Tingib and Ilog-ako in the neighboring town of Pandan. It was endorsed by the regional EMB to its central office on June 10 for approval of the bureau.

A permit is effective for two years and renewable for another two years.

As the small-scale mining operations could proceed in the area covered by the EP application, the AMC board passed a resolution waiving its claims to the area in favor of individual applications filed by the company's officers, according to MGB Western Theresa Blessica Leo Yan Segaon.

Palmares explained that the officers decided to apply for small-scale permits because large-scale mining appeared unfeasible in the area based on initial studies.

Another company, JC Bonanza Mines Inc. (JCMMI), has been conducting survey and exploring at Pulchi in area covered by an MPSA (Mineral Production Sharing Agreement) issued to Tadeo Mineral Exploration Corp. The MPSA, issued on Jan. 16, 2001, covers San Roque and four other barangays of Libertad.

Based on SEC records, JCMMI was formed on Nov. 26, 2008, with the Delmarcos couple, Nicolaya, Pandoloy and Chua as incorporators.

Due to documents submitted to the SEC late last year, Mayor Jerry Palmares was listed as a minority stockholder with Chua Ho Che Ong, a Hong Kong national, as chair. The controlling share belongs to TSOI Mineral Investments Ltd.

Palmares said he entered into a partnership with other investors because of the large capital requirement for mining operations.

JCMMI sent a geological team to the Tadeo MPSA area in late October to conduct survey and investigation for a period of six weeks.

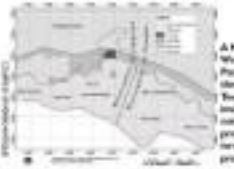
According to Ma. Imelda-a Lopez, secretary general of the Manila-as Ecological Movement, small-scale mining applications and operations in Panay, as well as in Guimaras, are really large-scale projects. The two islands have a combined area of 1,229.704 ha with remaining forest cover totaling only 207.607 ha.

The projects involve the extraction and processing of metallic and nonmetallic materials, including gold, copper, chromite, manganese, iron, marble, silica and limestone.

As of August, pending and approved applications for mining rights in Panay and Guimaras cover a total of 162,774.9 ha, data from the EMB regional office showed. These include 140,884.0 ha with pending applications and 21,890 ha with approved applications.

In Guimaras alone, the coverage of pending and approved mining applications has reached 14,580.167 ha or more than half (57.21 percent) of the 60,407-ha land area of the island province.

(To be continued)



A MAP of the North-Western Panay Peninsula showing the mining area of Teodoro Mariega, inside the buffer zone of the protected area and new-and-new mining projects.

A CHILD watches as one of the starting lights in a view of a miniature Christmas village, one of the attractions at the Sakuma's Christmas Pottery House in Barangay Lonoy, Pulo town, Leyte.

19 days of Christmas festivities

By Vicente S. Labao
Pulo, Leyte

Why [illegible] people flock to the ancient town of Pulo in Leyte, the seat of the Catholic hierarchy in Eastern Visayas? There are a lot of reasons.

The main streets are decked with well-lighted Christmas trees and other décor items. The park is ablaze with dazzling lights and display because of seasonal vines and "belen" (Nativity Scene).

Stage presentations, exhibits and competitions keep the holiday spirit alive in this third-class municipality of nearly 50,000 people.

Pulo's Christmas Festival 2011 offers 19 days of festivities with the theme "Dios se Iya Pulo, Lamang ka Pasko (Only Pulo, the Light of Christmas)." It kicked off on Dec. 14 with the announced switch-on of Christmas lights and will end on Jan. 2, 2012, with the unveiling of prizes to contest winners.

Joyful Mysteries

A theme presentation of each of the five Joyful Mysteries was held on Dec. 17-21, along with the "panata," a song-and-dance drama about Joseph and Mary's search for a room to rest one night.

To greet the new year, a "Simulat" (Countdown ceremony) competition will take place on Dec. 31.

Other activities include the "Belenkitan," a fabric-decoration competition showcasing local designs; a stop-motion photo-booth, and contests in hip-hop dancing, puppet-making, drama, caroling, "saka" (Pilipino poetry reading) and band music.

Awardees will be made by the most decorated residence, best lighted house, most decorated lantern, and best Santa Claus and belen. Prizes range from P1,000 to P10,000.

Community effort

Pulo Mayor Honorio Hernandez Tecilla says the festival is a community effort. "The people join hands in putting up the lights and decors and in the making and decorating the lanterns and Christmas trees."

He said the festival was being held in cooperation with the Pulo Christmas Festival Foundation Inc. and other groups, such as the Santa Claus Club of Pulo.

The event also features the Baloy ni Santa Claus (House of Santa Claus) and the Sakuma's Christmas Pottery House in Barangay Lonoy.

Formally opened in 1988, the Christmas Pottery House showcases various Christmas villages, the wildlife, angels, toy trains, decorated fireplaces, Nativity scenes and animated toys that its owners have been collecting from his trips abroad.

The Baloy ni Santa Claus, located just across the Pulo Metropolitan Cathedral, is actually the Pedrosa ancestral house that was used as the municipal library. The door, the building has become home to replicas of Santa Clauses of different shapes and sizes.

Manulife Philippines Group Advisory

To our valued Manulife customers:

Manulife is one with the Filipino people during times of difficulty. As we have done in the past, we have extended the grace period for an additional thirty (30) calendar days for those clients affected with the recent typhoon Sendong resulting to deep/high floods in Cagayan de Oro, Iligan City, Bukidnon and Dumaguete City.

- The thirty (30) calendar day extension will apply to ALL life insurance policies issued and assumed by **The Manufacturers Life Insurance Co. (Phils.), Inc. ("Manulife Philippines")** whose due dates fall from **October 16, 2011 through December 16, 2011**
- The thirty (30) calendar day extension will also apply to ALL life insurance policies issued by the **Manulife Chinabank Life Assurance Corporation** whose due dates fall from **October 16, 2011 through December 16, 2011**
- The thirty (30) calendar day extension will apply to ALL pension and education plans issued and assumed by **Manulife Financial Plans, Inc.** whose due dates fall from **September 16, 2011 through December 16, 2011**

Likewise, we will also be waiving the duplicate policy fee for those clients who have lost/damaged their policy contracts due to the above incident. We will allow processing for all requests received up to February 16, 2012.

Client Services and Branch Operations personnel at our Makati City Head Office and Branches nationwide will be available during office hours to entertain the concerns of our walk-in policyholders, planholders and their beneficiaries.

Metro Manila customers may also directly contact **Manulife Customer Care at (02) 884-7000** while provincial customers may call **toll free at 1-800-1-888-MANU (6268)** during office hours, e-mail at **phcustomercare@manulife.com** or visit our company website **www.manulife.com.ph** and/or customer service website **www.mymanulife.com.ph**.

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Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Dichoso

SPORTS

Unlikely s'finalists out to prove worth

By Minong R. Castillo

AFTER saying a Gokaru, Gary David will go out and try to lead Powerade to the championship.

THOSE months ago definitely looks like fans either opposed of a Final Four pairing, one that no one thought possible until the nine squads brought down Limited bars last week.

But the Bolts or Shine-Powerade semifinal duel is a title shot in the PBA Philippine Cup eventually drawn a lot of attention.

The top picks in the rookie class of this season will all be seeing action in the best-of-seven series, all of them having crucial roles to play for the respective squads with Paul Lanoo Pedercini getting the ire with a lot of help from No. 2 choice Fred Lee.

It took JV Casio some time to get out of the injured list and adjust to the pro style of play, but once the top overall draft choice got going, it took so much to stop the 6-foot-8 spiker out of La Salle.

B-Meg, the No. 1 seed in the quarterfinals, found that out the hard way as the Llamados fell two straight games against the Tigers.

And after the Brimers swept crowd-darling Barangay Ginebra in their best-of-three showdown, the midfielder Paul Pogi pairing partners Ayo, one bench of more structure but certainly one that can crown new heroes when the smoke of the battle clears.

"Everyone deserves to be in the semifinals. They worked hard for it," Bolts coach Yeng Guiao said. "They were the underdogs, but they beat the odds. They can strike again if we let them be."

Powerade's Gary David has worked a long time to be this deep in the playoffs, and if the cookbreaker to play the role he has done this season, being crowned as a legitimate superstar in the PBA will just be a few months for the more 23-year-old.

He finished with 37 points in the game that knocked the Llamados out, making eight triples in one stretch that caught Ginebra attention. David scored 26 straight Powerade points.

"The way Gary David is playing, we have to find a way to let Gerry bet Ennis," said Guiao of David, who averaged 16.5 points in their spoof of the Llamados.

David himself couldn't take his eye off the match against B-Meg, saying in Filipino that he has "waited for this chance for a long time and won't waste the opportunity".

"They said that there was no chance in hell (that we would win this series)," David said. "We proved them wrong."

When asked if the semifinal victory had given him and the rest of the Tigers their sense of fulfillment already, if the naming of the top rival means mission complete, David immediately said they were going to give for more.

"We're not satisfied yet."

Interestingly, David will try to accomplish his goal against his former coach, under whose tutelage he cannot vote coach Joseph.

But more than David, attention would focus on the Lee-Casio matchup, which will finally happen for the first time since Casio cut a 93-96 loss to Rain or Shine in the eliminations because of an injury.

Casio and Lee have impressive averages going to the semis.

Casio is scoring at a rate of 11.2 points and is tossing out 6.2 assists on outing while Lee is averaging 12.7 points, 4.3 rebounds and 4.5 assists per game.

More importantly, with Lee showing he is Rookie player material, people began questioning Powerade's decision to reach the former University of the Eastern in favor of Casio.

In a word, Lee will be out to prove to do-observed to the No. 1 pick. Casio will also go all out to prove that Powerade was right all along.

Casio also eventually ended up as the starting point guard of the Smart Gilas Pilipinas program, which Lee declined to be a part of.

Talk N Text, the defending champion, and Petron Blaze, the reigning Governors' Cup titleholder, are the other semifinal pairing. Their series starts Jan. 5 also in the Araneta Coliseum.

Talk N Text needed just two games to dispose of dangerous Barako Bull in their quarterfinal pairing, while Petron swept Meralco, 2-0, in their own series.

Coseteng swim unearths new pool talents

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DEN tennis emerged from the inaugural Nikki Coseteng swimming championships held recently at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Coseteng, of the Dilman Preparatory School and the events that organizers said they have achieved their goal of harnessing raw talents from the grassroots by putting up the competition for the age-groupers from all over the country in 24 events.

Easily the most outstanding swimmer was 12-year-old Paula Carmina of the Ayo Aquajets Dragon Team, who amassed four golds in the event, three of them meeting the United States standards.

"I would like to thank the parents and school authorities and all the swim clubs. This proved that given a good program, they will not have to travel long just to the lowest of Philippine swimming," said Coseteng, a former swimmer, who staged the event with the Philippine Swimming League.

Carmina broke the 09 AAGA mark in 30-meter freestyle (29.60 seconds with a time of 28.58 seconds), and in the 50-meter variation, 28.84 seconds in 28.86. She is topped the AA breaststroke of 1:20.09. Carmina matched the 100m backstroke after a 1:20.70 time which was better than the A standard of 1:23.26. She also took the 200m individual medley honors.

Fourteen-year-old Nikki Aquino also posted impressive times in snatching four golds of her own. The University of the Philippines student leader won the 50m free and 100m breast.

But Aquino upset the win in the 200m IM when she clocked 2:45.00, which was faster than the A mark of 2:44.29 for that age group. She also surpassed the AA mark in 200m free (2:25.00) with a 2:22.86 effort.

Skyler Clarence of Grande A Cadets' team also made his presence felt with a stunning golden performance in the boys 13 to 14 200m IM. He bit his gold in the 100m breast set last open at the 13-year-old beat the A standard of 1:14.79 AAA standard when he finished with 1:13.96.

Andrei Mateo, a 13-year-old from Raging Dolphins of Marikina, assisted the 15-17 200m freestyle with a time of 1:51.31, which far exceeded the AAA standard of 1:53.89. His teammate Benedict Gregorio, 14, broke the AA time in 13-14 200m free (2:17.09) with a time of 2:14.63.

Also garnering multiple golds was Claire Adriano, 18, and swimming for UP varsity. Her biggest golds in 16-over 50m free, 100m back and 200m IM.

The competition had swimmers as young as 7 years old and among the standouts was 10-year-old Gianne Cassidy Reyes, who collected three golds in 10-under 50-meter butterfly, 100m freestyle and 50m backstroke.

Helterbrand stays with Gin Kings

By Colred Flores, Inquirer.net

MVP Helterbrand is not yet walking away from the game and the league that has been his home for the past decade.

Gin Kings' top guard spelled all the buzz about an impending retirement last night and announced he's staying with the Gin Kings and the PBA.

"I decided to stay and keep playing," said Helterbrand in an exclusive interview with InterAKTV.

His decision, while having a lot to do with the love for the game, needed the cooperation of his daughters.

"I have thought about it. A lot of things play a big part in my decision, biggest part is my daughter [Jaylyn]. I talked to her and she said she was willing to go to school here," said Mr. Reliable.

Helterbrand has two daughters, Jaylyn, 14, and Jasmine, 13, who are living with his parents in the United States.

Hobbled by nagging injuries, haunted by the Gin Kings' sub-par performance the past year and itching to spend more time with his daughters, the 39-year-old Helterbrand didn't keep it a secret that he was planning to retire.

"Last couple of years, I've been getting injured pretty consistently. It's tough that I hold up to the schedule of PBA. I don't wanna play if I'm not 100 percent. I may be limiting the team," he said in the InterAKTV interview with Mike Abrigo.

As to whether he still wants to don Ginebra jersey or not, Helterbrand has no doubts.

"I'm staying with Ginebra as long as I'm in the PBA, as long as they want me. I can't see myself in another team," said Helterbrand.

Lim shows potential despite defeat

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HUMBO junior player Albert Lim Jr. put up a gallant stand against top-seeded Russian Artem Dolbnikov before eventually dropping a 7-6 (7-3), 6-1 decision in the finals of the Omega Boys International tennis championships 12s Plaridel in Gerald Golden, Manila.

The 13-year-old Lim made it to the finals, pulling off upset wins after semifinal only to his first tournament mentored by United States Texan Amerikanos.

His runner-up finish also brought excitement to the Filipino tennis community especially after he trampled second seed Alexander del Corral of the UP 06-2, 6-1) and 9th pick Noah Makoto-san, also of the UP, 6-2, 6-1).

But the lured a more experienced Dolbnikov who just managed his fifth title in 13 tournaments he played this year.

Lim is a regular campaigner in 14s and 16s in local tournaments and recently won the Marikina Foundation Cup ATP 14-under honor at home. He is also an overseas veteran of Carabao Tennis Center in Los Angeles.

Orange Bowl is one of only five Grade A event moments in the junior circuit which is only a rank below the 18s and Majors.

Chelsea seals draw behind Terry heroics

JOHN Terry gestures on the pitch.

LONDON—Chelsea captain John Terry withstood a torrent of knee from Tottenham Hotspur following his charge for twice to secure a valuable point for his side on Thursday.

After Emmanuel Adebayor's shot had beaten Chelsea goalkeeper Petr Cech to stoppage time, Terry diverted the ball nicely from goal—a decisive deflection that ensured his side a 1-1 draw at White Hart Lane.

"We anticipated the situation at the end—it was a big opportunity for Tottenham," Chelsea manager Andre Villas-Boas said.

A clear striker, Terry became the first footballer in England to receive a 4-match charge for excluding opponents. He will appear to be caught in a defensive role as he was alleged to have used racist language toward Queens Park Rangers defender Anton Ferdinand in an October Premier League match.

"His performances have increased since the incident happened," Villas-Boas said.

With threats coming down from the White Hart Lane stands, even Chelsea official Terry's foot jettisoned Terry as in "under-the-slipper."

In denying Tottenham a victory, it was all the reasons, after Chelsea striker Daniel Sturridge canceled out Adebayor's right-minute opener.

"I am very proud of the players under a lot of adversity—there was a good spirit of resistance," Villas-Boas said. "It is a moral win."

But Chelsea remains fourth in the standings, two points behind Tottenham and just a point down Arsenal. London Manchester City is 11 points ahead of Chelsea.

MAGGIE Wilson celebrates after his game-clinching touchdown.

Colts stop playoff-bound Texans

INDIANAPOLIS—Indianapolis' Reggie Wayne caught a touchdown pass with 39 seconds left to give the Colts only their second win of the season, beating the playoff-bound Houston Texans 19-16 to the NFL on Thursday.

After 10 straight losses, the Colts (2-13) have won back-to-back games and drew level on wins with St. Louis and Minnesota in the reverse "race" for the No. 1 overall draft pick.

Quarterback Dan Orlovsky, who played the previous two seasons with Houston, also won his second straight game after losing his first nine NFL starts.

"Reggie certainly had a spectacular game," Colts coach Jim Caldwell said.

The Texans looked anything but playoff-ready. They settled for two field goals in the second quarter, didn't convert a third-down and getting a facts because late in the fourth quarter their running game was stymied late and the defense helped the Colts with three penalties on the defensive drive.

Houston (11-4) is now 0-3 in Indianapolis and hasn't scored more than 20 points in a game for consoles.

When Houston's Brian Cushing broke through the line on the game's first play, sacking Orlovsky and stripping the ball, it looked like it might've a replica of the teams' first meeting, a 34-7 blowout. Arian Foster ran for 6 yards on the next play then scored on a 9-yard burst off the left side to give Houston a 7-0 lead.

National Amateur Doubles Championship blasts off Dec. 26

A WEEK-LONG battle for inaugural honors is expected when the National Golf Association of the Philippines stages the National Doubles Amateur Championship on Dec. 26, featuring members of the national pool, the Jaegolf series and the rising players of various clubs at the APP Golf Club (formerly Agusuclub Golf Club).

Rupert Zamgoco and Don Perdi head the roster of national training pool members vying in the 54-hole tournament which puts emphasis on team play and provides the field a different kind of competition.

Zamgoco, the reigning junior and national champion, has tapped Junior Quilnet of the NCAP development pool in the event conducted by the NCAP, while Perdi will be paired with Victor Pardillo of APP-DC. Others competing in the competitive Group I are Jaegolf and PH team member Adrian Carlos, JP De Claro, Joey Huerva, Ali Ramos and Andrei Sakkalia.

Carlos, a UA golf scholar, will team up with fellow Jaegolfer Raymond Umandal. De Claro will be with Eric Galbadia, Huerva will partner with Lawrence Celestino, Ramos has linked up with APP GC's Jarus Reyes and Sakkalia picks fellow Jaegolfer Ronnie Labao.

National pool customary tar Arbolo will be teaming up with Jaegolf standout Gabriel Manzano.

Ernesbiga's Arnaiz Mata and Agustin Mata, Villaroel's Julius Pacalsolo and Mic Salabag and Forest Hills' Hugo Raymundo and Jonne Ramirez are also vying in the event to be played under the foursome, four-ball and aggregate format.

Other titles to be disputed are the Group II (minimum handicap of 5.1), and Group III (mid-amateur, 40 years old) and the ladies division.

Group I is exclusive for members of the national team which represented the country in the last SEA Games, the Pusoy Cup, the Quezon City Cup and the World Amateurs.

Play will be foursomes (alternate shot) in the first day and four-balls (best ball) in the second round. The final round will have the combined aggregate of the teams.

ZAMAGOZA

Naguiat, Wu, Avante share limelight in BMW golfest

STEPHEN Naguiat, Rolando Avante and Arch Wu topped their respective divisions in the BMW Golf Cup International at the Mitch Whyte Golf and Country Club over the weekend.

The trio will represent the country in the BMW Golf Cup International in Singapore, where players from 30 countries are vying action in March next year.

Naguiat fired 57 points under the modified stableford format to win men's class A division of the event that listed 80 participants. Shinichi Ogihara and Fumiko Okamura in second up second and third, respectively.

Avante chalkboard Naguiat's four to claim B, finishing with 63 points to edge Rudy Fontanos and Bernardo Cruz.

Wu took the ladies title with 47 points, beating Mary Ann Reyes and Eleanor Leong, who settled for second and third, respectively.

Marcus Pano of BMW distributor Astra Carmakers Corporation was on hand to award the champions, along with Singapore Auditore Philippines general manager Andrew Buckman and ACC sales and marketing executive director Glen Dang.

Djokovic tries to follow up on incredible run in 2011

LONDON—Novak Djokovic is about to find out what it takes to follow up on a nearly unbeatable season.

The 24-year-old Serb won three of the four grand slams titles, lifted seven other trophies and wrested the No. 1 ranking from Rafael Nadal. His 70-6 record included a staggering 43-match winning streak to begin the season.

"It was incredible," Djokovic said. "I made so many wins in a row that I really didn't count any more. I was just trying to play one match at the time and trying to think how long the streak will go on, not where it will end."

Djokovic eventually fell one point of matching John McEnroe's record of 42 straight wins to begin the 1985 season. Despite that, the Australian great said the tougher competition and greater athleticism in today's game made the Serb's feat "more impressive."

The run also included four wins over Nadal, all in finals. Two of those came on clay, Spanish fans favorite clay surface.

Djokovic, who won the Australian Open early in the season, finally lost in June when Roger Federer prevailed in the French Open semifinals. But the Serb quickly picked himself up and swept the Wimbledon and US Open titles.

In those finals, Djokovic seemed certain to repeat his Federal Cup success. He held two match points on serve in the fifth set of their semifinal match, but Djokovic saved both—the first with a blistering forehand return winner that was one of the year's most memorable moments.

It was also the perfect demonstration of the belief that Djokovic says was the key to his dominant improvement in 2011 after a three-year gap since his first Grand Slam title in 2008.

"The tools to clear this year, mentally I am more mature and a stronger player," he said. "I believe on the court more in my qualities, more that I can win against Federer and Nadal and all the top players." AP

CHERRY CALIGDONG will get another chance to hone his skills in the LBE.

PH Azkals eye Bahrain, Dubai training camps

By Cedelf F. Tupas

THE PHILIPPINE Football Federation (PFF) is eyeing Bahrain and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates as possible locations for the Philippine Azkals' training camp in preparation for the AFC Challenge Cup in March.

PFF president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta yesterday said that Bahrain has expressed interest to host the national side in its buildup for the eight-nation Challenge Cup in Nepal.

Araneta said that the offer from Bahrain includes free accommodations, while those arranging friendly matches for the Azkals.

The Azkals also held camp in Bahrain last July and gained a huge following in the oil-rich nation as they toughened up for their World Cup Qualifying second round match against Kuwait.

"We could save money if we hold camp in Bahrain," said Araneta, noting that a camp to Dubai would cost about P2.5 million.

Azkals team manager Dan Palami said the planned 10-day camp is scheduled on the second week of February.

The Azkals will play Malaysia in a friendly on Feb. 29 at Rizal Memorial Stadium, before flying to Kathmandu for the Challenge Cup, where they will face Myanmar, Tajikistan and India.

Several members of the national side will be back in action as early as Jan. 7 when the Azkals along with many of the United Football League (UFL) battle Spanish fourth division team Internacional de Madrid in a charity match dubbed "Tibi kamingka-tiw" that will benefit victims of Typhoon Sendong in Mindanao.

Meanwhile, Araneta said work on the FIFA project to transform the Philsports pitch into an all-weather artificial turf will begin in March.

The PFF head, who was with FIFA consultant Marcus Bellos recently regarding the project, said the pitch should be ready by June.

"The pitch in Ultra is very important as we won't have to use the Rizal Memorial Stadium all the time for national team practices," said Araneta.

The Philippines pitch will be used for training by national teams as well as for competitions like the UFL, the NCAA and the UAAP.

"With an all-weather turf, there won't be any postponements just because of an unplayable field," said Araneta.

Floyd may be segregated from other inmates

LAS VEGAS—Jail is looming for champion boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr., who will give up his training schedule, club-hopping and television in his multimillion-dollar custody club license after the Nevada Supreme Court rejected a three-month sentence for Clark County Detention Center in Las Vegas.

Mayweather's lawyers and his promoter-manager wouldn't say Thursday whether the 34-year-old Mayweather will file documents asking a Las Vegas judge to reconsider her decision to sentence the undefeated prizefighter to 90 days in county jail for domestic violence and harassment.

Las Vegas Justice of the Peace Melissa Saragosa on Wednesday called jail time appropriate for Mayweather for attacking his ex-girlfriend, Josie Harris, and threatening their two sons while the children watched a fist-pulling, biting and name-cursing argument in September 2010 at Harris' home. The judge ordered Mayweather to surrender Jan. 6.

Mayweather got credit for three days previously served in jail and was ordered to complete a year-long domestic violence counseling program, 100 hours of community service and pay a $1,000 fine.

Jail will upset the routine of a man characterized by his defense lawyer as fanatical and "meticulous in how he prepares himself," who practices and works hard, and whose "off time are" unfamiliar with Harris is sometimes volatile.

MAYWEATHER

Harris first in the Las Vegas area with the couple's two sons, now 12 and 10, and a daughter age 8.

Las Vegas police submitted the high-shot Clark County Jail in downtown Las Vegas. Officer Bill Gaskill said Thursday that as a high-profile inmate, Mayweather will probably be segregated for his protection from the other 3,500 other prisoners—at least for the first week. AP

Non-Olympic athletes finally get a big break

CLEAN LIVING

Hanndo B. Fdgo

COMMISSION Int. Antonio Tillanon IV for coming to the rescue of the country's long-suffering athletes and coaches by working to amend Republic Act 9064 or the Sports Incentives Act by including even non-Olympic champions.

Tillanon also urges to increase the cash rewards for all medal-winning athletes in the Southeast Asian Games and other international sports meets like the Olympics, Asian Games and World Championships, bemoaning his chairmanship to help empower the dying Philippine sports.

"I'll take the lead in helping out the national athletes receive more incentives," said Tillanon, who had earlier batted for the abolition of the Philippine Sports Commission following the disastrous Philippine campaign in the recent 26th Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia, where the supposedly best and brightest Filipino athletes could only finish sixth overall, their worst since joining the SEA Games on Feb. 1, 1977.

Although long in coming, there was already a chance to include billiards, bowling, golf and chess, which are not Olympic events, but where the Philippines has produced world-class performers in the recent years.

Filipino athletes in non-Olympic sports like chess and dancesport also proved their worth by contributing to the overall PH medal tally of three gold medals, four silver and nine bronze in last year's Guangzhou Asian Games.

Pacific-based bowler Biboy Rivera and reigning World Billiards Player of the Year Dennis Orcollo captured a gold medal each; golf, three and billiards bagged a silver each while two bowlers came from a chance couple and another one from bowling.

The cry for providing cash and other benefits to non-Olympic heroes actually dated more than a decade ago.

At the forefront of the crusade was the late Aurea "Pepsi" Nepomuceno, the Philippines' winningest bowling coach in history and father to no-time world bowling champion Bubut "Biboy" Nepomuceno.

Much later, former Standard Chartered Bank Manila Paranaque's site supported the movement, handing out envelopes to the heroes of the non-Olympic events such as billiards' Efren "Bata" Reyes, Rapeller Dave Ada's first Grand-master and, of course, Nepomuceno.

Former Sunmidelpanai Jose "Pepit" Papot also extended a helping hand, said he: "The heroes who left no address and numbers that were recently rescued from the Republic Act No. 9064 is a step in the right direction, but it does not go far enough, because only those achievements in quadrennial competitions like the Olympics, World Championships and the Asian Games are researched.

"Despite public duress past achievements in annual and biennial competitions were omitted. Now Olympic events like bowling, golf, billiards and chess as rule, hold annual and biennial competitions. This is taken out sports heroes like Reyes, Dorothy Delasin and Rene and other deserving athletes have brought home to the country."

These athletes have no Olympics to look forward to, but the love of their own, still, they have been encouraged and honored here and abroad. Both Nepomucenos and Reyes are recipients of the prestigious "Legion of Honor" medal and were also honored by Congress resolutions.

Anyway, real equality must be applied to all deserving athletes whose success inspire and unify the nation. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year everyone!

2nd Stags Run 2012: Takbo para sa Edu-Misyon

SAN SEBASTIAN College-Recoletos will stage the 2nd Stags Run 2012 dubbed "Takbo para sa Edu-Misyon" on Jan. 21 next year, going around the Ayuntas City in Intramuros teamed near the Mall of Asia and Mindpanagi Boulevard.

Organizers headed by San Sebastian president Fr. Anthony Murillo, CSsR, seeks to draw bigger participation and match, if not surpass, the 5,500 runners that took part last year in the event that coincides with the 40th Foundation Week celebration of the Manila-based school.

This year's run hopes to generate funds for the CSsR mission in Sierra Leone in West Africa as well as in Caniac Island in Palawan where San Sebastian has moved in on their educational apostolate.

"This is the second time we're hosting an event like this and like last year, we hope to get some funds to fund our educational apostolate not just in West Africa but also in our country in Palawan," said Murillo, former president of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Murillo flew to Sierra Leone recently, an effort aim to promote physical well-being to everyone through running," added Murillo.

Competitions will be divided into three categories, 8K, 5K and 10K, starting at 6 a.m. at the SEA grounds.

By TOP CHOICE
de San Lazaro LP

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No more driving for now for 3 bus drivers

Random drug tests in terminals in line with DOTC's 'Safe Christmas' drive

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THREE bus drivers who tested positive for drug use will be kept off the road, in line with the Department of Transportation and Communications' (DOTC) efforts to make travelling safe for motorists this holiday season.

The DOTC said its random drug tests at major public transport terminals over the weekend yielded three more bus drivers and set yet kicked the drug habit, despite the recent crackdown on illegal substances in the aftermath of several highly-publicized road mishaps.

The department said officers of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) on Friday apprehended three drivers—two from Cebu province and one from Metro Manila—who tested positive for drug use.

Random drug tests were first carried out by the DOTC through its law agencies last November.

"Because of the success of the project, we implemented it again this holiday season. The fact that we were able to ferret out suspected drug users shows that the project we have launched can help travel for all passengers," LTFRB Chair Jaime Bautista said.

Drivers found to be drug users will face the corresponding legal penalties, he added, including the confiscation of their licenses.

The drug tests, which were carried out by personnel in bus terminals in Metro Manila, Pasay City, Quezon City and Makati, Cebu (South Bus Terminal), Iloilo and Bacolod City (Ceres Terminal), ran a week ahead of the DOTC's "Safe Christmas" campaign.

Edgardo Cabiso, LTO senior director of the law enforcement service, said 202 drivers of 66 buses were inspected from Dec. 22 to 23 in Cebu. Two of these buses yielded positive results for drugs.

In Metro Manila, the LTO operated 72 buses, and tested 67 drivers, one of whom was also found to be positive for drug use. Only 54 buses were inspected, and 19 drivers were tested, while 48 buses were checked, and 24 drivers were tested in Bacolod. All yielded negative results for drugs.

The use of drugs, particularly shabu, and intoxication are blamed for many road mishaps, with some accusing drivers who have to stay awake during long drives.

MetroBriefs

Echiverri seeks court action on pay parking case

CALOOCAN Mayor Enrico Echiverri is fighting a parking fee's move that sought to confront criminal charges filed against him for the supposed illegal arrest of parking attendants in 2008. A complaint filed by the Caloocan lawyer Fred Echiverri and Echiverri asked the antigraft court to deny Jadecott Parking System's opposition to the prosecution's motion to dismiss the case against him. The case against Echiverri stemmed from his alleged illegal arrest of Jadecott attendants who were enforcing a pay parking system that had been suspended. The Office of the Special Prosecutor earlier ordered the case's dismissal for the reason that Echiverri, as an elective public servant brought to his office for questioning and were not to sought in the city jail. The OSP's move came after the mayor filed a motion for reconsideration on the indictment. The mayor said Jadecott's arguments against the dismissal of his case were "flimsy and devoid of any merit." Meanwhile, Jadecott also asked the Sandiganbayan to allow it to file its reply to the prosecutors' comment where the latter stood firm on its findings for the dismissal of the case. It also sought a review of the court of what it said were "flip-flopping" decisions of the prosecution. Leila B. Salaverria

Ex-prisoner shot dead by 4 armed men in QC

A NEWLY freed prison inmate was shot and killed by four armed gunmen while having dinner at an eatery on Thursday night in Quezon City. The victim, Richard Uday, 38, was a members who was released recently from jail for being involved in a robbery. Case investigator PO2 Hermogenes Capili said the victim died on the spot from several gunshot wounds at Jony's Batchoy in Barangay Commonwealth. Police recovered seven fired cartridges and one shell on the floor of the eatery. Witnesses told police that the suspects immediately fled from the scene. Julie M. Aurelio

Toll-free travel on Skyway System on Dec. 24, 31

MOTORISTS using the Skyway System's 13.5-kilometer Magallanes-Alabang-C-5 route and the 16.2-kilometer Buendia-Alabang elevated section will enjoy toll-free travel starting at 12 p.m. on Dec. 24 until 6 a.m. the following day, and from 10 a.m. on Dec. 31 to 6 a.m. on Jan. 1, Skyway O&M Corp.'s external affairs head, Lt Ipaomonomo, announced today. "This is our way of showing our appreciation with our motoring partners during the yuletide season," said Ipaomonomo. For more information on the Skyway's toll rates or any commercial inquiries, motorists can call the Skyway System hotlines at (02) 710-7777; Globe: (0917-888-1248; Smart: (0919-000-1980 or Sun: (0923-402-8188.

Armored van driver abducted? No way, says mayor

By Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Nino Calleja

Abalos was quick to deny he punched and abducted the driver of the armored car, claiming he had merely escorted the latter to a traffic violation.

"I did not punch nor abduct anyone. We only asked for the license of the driver of the vehicle which had been parked on Shaw Boulevard and was obstructing traffic for several minutes," Abalos said in a phone interview.

A police blotter identified the driver as Daniel Valenzuela, 32, a resident of Antipolo City.

Abalos said the armored car was illegally parked in front of a store on Shaw Boulevard.

"I was a witness when this armored car parked there without regard to the traffic," he said.

Mandaluyong City public information chief Jenny Isidro said the mayor was on his way to a meeting with local officials at the Legend Hotel when he saw the traffic buildup and what caused it.

The driver initially refused to give his license to the traffic enforcer assigned in the area, prompting him to contact one of his aides and accost the driver himself, the mayor said.

Isidro said there could have been a slight misunderstanding in the area because the driver refused to surrender his license.

After he was given a violation ticket, the driver apologized to the mayor and the traffic enforcer, he said.

Abalos said the driver was merely escorted by the traffic enforcers to city hall to pay the fine.

"How could we abduct him? Being an armored van, the money coming in all carried long functions," he said.

At city hall, too, it was obvious why police chief Rolando Asuncion got involved.

Asuncion, who appealed to Inquirer not to reveal information that could harm a public official like Abalos, reportedly if he had no proof of what really happened.

Make every day Christmas day

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CLEEN out your closets of old clothes and set aside a big amount from your Christmas budget to be given to the flood victims of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City.

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Incorrectly, people who don't share their wealth with others soon lose it.

Money is meant to be circulated, that's why it's called currency.

You stop the flow of money to yourself when you hoard it, as money is meant to be circulated.

One way to keep money circulating in your life is to give it away.

You see the Gods Tan, Manny Pangilinan and Jun Miguel Cojuangco Jr. because they know the benefits of sharing their wealth with the needy.

You, Pangilinan and Cojuangco are the forefront of giving financial and material aid to "breaking" victims in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan.

These wealthy people know that the huge amount they give away to the needy returns to them a hundredfold.

Best-selling author Robert Collier, in his book "Riches Within Your Reach," says "the secret to getting results is getting, just as surely as planting results in harvesting. Give with no thought of reward for the good of the cause you are helping, and good is bound to flow back to you."

So, give to the needy, especially to the latest victims of this tragedy-prone country.

Give till it hurts and you will be overwhelmed with a flood of goodness and prosperity.

Make every day Christmas day by giving away money to charities and institutions that you deem spiritual inspirational from, like your church.

You will find that the Universe will make Christmas year-out-of-you—full of gifts—when you are generous.

A different kind of Christmas, unusual gifts for political detainees

By Alan R. Jacinto, Contributor

FOR POLITICAL prisoners, celebrating the season of Yuletide and New Year does not only mean receiving Christmas gifts from loved ones and relatives and partaking of the usual holiday fare on tables groaning with delicacies.

As victims of political repression, political detainees in military camps all over the country—264 at last count, including 53 women—remember with activists and advocates of social change, that time of the year is the period when they not only mark the Christmas season but other important dates like the International Day for Political Prisoners, International Human Rights Day, the anniversary of the execution of the Governor Hurley of the Philippines and the dawn of the New Year.

Struggle

But what keeps these brave souls is a litany of activities to celebrate the season never to their years of continuous struggle.

These activities not only serve to boost their spirits but also as outlet to bond with officers detainees, and link them up as well with advocates of human rights, justice and freedom outside their prison cells.

Most important, these events prepare them for bigger struggles ahead.

For the past several years, in diverse dates during the period, political prisoners at the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame would gather their cadre and join other fellow detainees, their loved ones and other guests for day-long political, cultural and other activities that include exciting poems, singing songs and performing musical numbers or indigenous dances.

Two years ago, a painting contest with a freedom and human rights theme was held as a consciousness-raising and information effort.

Sufficient time is also given for meaningful political discussions on current national and international issues, developments and perspectives in the struggle for liberation and freedom.

Because of their limited resources, political prisoners are not able to give gifts as much as they would like to, or they make do by crafting hand-made cards that show not only an artistic bent but carry meaningful messages as well.

Victories

In their remembrances of things past in 2011, they recalled a year of victories, such Valentine "gifts" received in the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

All the more reason for them to celebrate this year in all cells, some of the more elusive freedoms of all political prisoners still has to be won.

Some of these "victories" came in the form of positive action as a result of protest letters, exposés, collective work and meaningful dialogues with custodial center officials. "Boto pa lahat."

■ No more day-long padlocking of cell blocks during non-visiting days. Detainees can now exercise, engage in sports, tend to their plants and mingle with prisoners in other cell blocks during the day, before their cells and cell blocks are padlocked at night.

■ No more late night interrogations of prison personnel, who either forget to their cells after those are already padlocked, or those who sleep in the corridor of the night, awaken unnecessary noises and abuse them in white, or take out human compositional detainees to entertain them late in the night.

■ No more forced labor and related abuses like cultivating their own vegetables for their own others they can receive visitors.

Complaints against two visiting police officials who were implicated in the commission of those activities to their relief from their posts.

Respect

Detainees have remarkably maintained their respect for fellow human beings, even those who are only the keepers of prison authorities—who have responded to the compliments with close, decisive action—but also the guards who interact daily with them.

Small and insignificant as these may seem to others, these are "gifts" hard-won and much appreciated by this tiny community which not only has to struggle with the day-to-day but with larger issues as well.

The quest for justice and freedom is much bigger and more formidable, and they still have a long way to go.

Camp Crame political detainees, for instance, have formally requested various government entities and human rights groups for a joint investigation of prevailing cases of rape, arbitrary and illegal arrest and detention.

For now, they have gained a number of valuable allies as "complete" victories.

But there are enough to build on as the year ends and they look forward to more and bigger victories ahead.

The author is coordinator of the National Democratic Front, Philippines and co-author of the *Philippine Reviews* Political Consultant Center in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

A CHRISTMAS card drawn and by the author and sent out to the INSURGENT Diplomats and others behind the barbed wire.

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Greco

In US, 12 days of Christmas will cost more than $100,000

GIVING the holiday presents of a French hen, a walking mold, a leaping lord or even a partridge in a pear tree is free of charge—and online sellers unlikely—in this rite and age. But the gifts from the favorite holiday carol "The 12 Days of Christmas," despite being decidedly quaint, are lighthearted clues to how the economy is faring.

Overall, prices are flashy rise. He and not doing precipitously for even the splashier gifts, according to the Christmas Price Index released for the 29th year by PNC Wealth Management, part of the PNC Financial Services Group. Or, the Bankrate.com Index, putting its first-ever-popping 364 items and services in each of the song's verses totals $100,000 for the first time this year.

Per the economist, and realistic, given—called "True Love" in the song—borrowing the gifts listed in the song would cost you 3.5 percent more than it did last year. The price, which reflects weaker consumer demand in a fragile economy, mirrors the federal government's Consumer Price Index, which increased 3.4 percent this year for the 12 items predominantly in the song's date's consumer. The items' tip was in the five-year norm released by the Department of Labor last week.

While even the most determined would find it daunting to purchase or mount all the 12-day festival gifts, perhaps for some single items in the song's clubhouse verses have fallen, perhaps offering a little consolation.

Gold, for example—is in the five golden rings—has fallen in price. Even though gold commodities, as measured by futures, have been hovering at record highs recently, the demand for gold is said to have weakening.

"The five golden rings dropped by 6% percent this year," said James P. Dunigan, PNC Wealth Management's managing executive of investment.

But Dunigan notes that the ladies contends is not smooth it—prices are gathered from store and local sources. The National Retail Federal, a trade publication that tracks jewelry sales, found in November that some jewelers were complaining that shoppers had "sticker shock" when looking for gold holiday gifts or wedding rings.

Encouragingly, labor costs remained fairly flat. The nine ladies dancing, for example, remained static, at $6,594, the same as last year, according to figures from Bilbaldonx, a chain company in Philadelphia. The 11 pipers piping are a color of $3,457.00, and 12 drummers drumming, for $3,629.99, were up modestly, about 3 percent. The only unskilled laborers in the crowd are the eight maids-a-milking, who are calculated as earning the $7.25 minimum hourly wage. That wage did not rise in 2011.But the current straight year, so their cost stayed the same.

The price tag for one round of gifts is $24,263. To this year, up $823.80 from last year. Repeating the gifts totaled eight by season from $154,080, a gain of 4.4 percent, also close to the federal price index.

"Typically we see parallels between our index and the federal government's," Dunigan said, "which was not the case last year. Still, we are talking about a small basket of goods and services here compared to the Consumer Price Index." AFP/WS

Kim's death triggers family intrigue in secretive dynasty

By Choo Sang Hoo

SEOUL, South Korea—Researchers scrutinizing North Korea's official images and lists of mourners paying respects to Kim Jong-il have noticed two conspicuous absences: the eldest brothers of Kim Jong-un, the appointed heir.

They also have been buzzing about the appearances of Hyo Oh, one of Kim Jong-il's dozen sides, who has served as the North's de facto first lady since Kim Jong-un's mother died in 2004. She showed up Wednesday to the North's party viewings of mourners are the Economic momentum in Pyongyang, the capital, when Kim Jong-il's body has been on display in a glass coffin since the official announcement of his death on Monday.

Identifying the accurate and absences in the world's most closed society is one of the few ways available to outsiders trying to solve the mystery of the unfolding succession in Pyongyang. They are looking for any clues about rebellion Kim Jong-un, the second son of Kim Jong-il's three wife, will be able to unseat control over the country's little dictatorship established by his father and grandfather.

Same questions

Similar questions hung over Kim Jong-il when he was anointed the North Korea's leader in 1994, after the death of Kim Jong-il, despite that have because of Kim Jong-un's youth and inexperience and the convoluted relations in the extended Kim family.

Here North Korea does, especially the official funeral, which includes Dec. 28, mobilizing hundreds of thousands of people to line the streets of Pyongyang, the capital, to pay their respects to Kim Jong-il.

And according to a Japanese media chief who in 2000 published a memoir about his experience working for the Kim family, the favorite son was Kim Jong-un, who closely resembles his grandfather, Kim Il-sung, the North's founding president and regal-like figure among North Koreans.

KCNA/Agence

Biggest rival

Focus on early age, Kim Jong-un liked to wear a military uniform and displayed hostility toward Japan, Korea's former colonial ruler, the chief said.

The mourners could have been that Jong-un's biggest competitors—his half brother Kim Jong-nam, 40—were less in effective unit in the Chinese gambling province of Macau. In conventional behavior with the secret media, he has sounded aloof as more recently critical of the dynastic succession unfolding in Pyongyang.

Since Kim Jong-il's death, there have been no public sightings of Kim Jong-nam. His name was not on the list of 233 prominent North Koreans requesting the funeral, issued on Dec. 19 by the state-run Korean Central News Agency. And he could participate in the funeral in Pyongyang, they might increase fears that Jong-nam, setting off an intrigue in which violence could not be ruled out.

"If I were Kim Jong-nam, I wouldn't come for the funeral. It is risk to Kim Jong-un, for is more a political enemy than a half brother," said Choi Jin-wook of the Korea Institute for National Unification in Seoul. "But is a precarious time for his siblings. They must be loyal to a extent like this, there are people no longer to prove their loyalty to the new king by removing anyone seen as threatening." Even if the siblings cannot for them to, there's feared, the regime would likely keep them out of public view to prevent them from rallying hostility from Kim Jong-un, analysts said. Should there be any consolidate power at last, they would be allowed to live a comfortable life, holding luxury titles at home or serving ambassadorships abroad.

Five sides

According to Baek Seung-joo at the Korea Institute for Defense Analyses in Seoul, a key indicator in the coming months will be whether Kim Jong-un will assume the top Ore Chon Ho Ho titles held—general secretary of the ruling Workers' Party, chair of the party's Central Military Commission, president of the Presidium of the Politburo, chair of the National Defense Commission and supreme commander of the People's Army. The son is now a lieutenant general and vice chair of the Central Military Commission.

On Thursday, the North's state party papers, Rodong Sinmun, said that the "great successor" Kim Jong-un would honor the "dying wishes" of his father by continuing his empire, or "military-first," policy, which gives priority to the army in the allocation of resources. New York Times/Asian Service

ARA VISTA VILLAGE

An Ideal Mix of Technology and Nature

Technology is something that people can't do without nowadays. Almost everything that is done in the modern era can be done either at their own homes or at the nearest Internet cafe.

Hence, imagine living in a community where internet access is available everywhere, even outside your house or office, and everyone in the village is either the neighbor's cousin or the school principal or the village playground or the clubhouse is never far from anybody.

That's exactly what Ara Vista Development has in mind when they created Ara Vista Village, a master-planned mixed-use community covering a sprawling 50 hectares in a General Trias, Cavite, Philippines is not the only that the PLDT Group of companies has in mind when they created Ara Vista Village. It is also a sustainable, living premium technology-based setting.

A PLDT HOMELINK NO OTHER

Futuristic living is no longer something you see in the movies. It's already a reality at Ara Vista Village. As a PLDT-enabled residential community, homeowners will have access to services in the World Wide Web from their homes and even in the area. they can surf the web, check their email and chat and send instant messages.

Within Ara Vista Village, Ara Vista Village also includes a PLDT-enabled commercial center, which will be located on Phase 1. That also shares a cost of the commercial center in front of the main road. Two-level 1.7 Park condo lines a road width of two meters, one of each side. Residents should be able to get a hold of their mobile laptops or mobile phones anywhere in the community.

Accessibility is not sacrificed at the expense of accessibility to those with multiple users. At the same time, internet connection should of good quality. It is built. The development APEC Phase 1 designed Ara Vista Village to such a way that no one should be deprived of a speedy bandwidth during their free day (and) go online.

All the high technology is designed to necessarily not clutter with the natural environment. It is developing Ara Vista Village around a naturally progressive town center for its close proximity to educational institutions like Lyceum of the Philippines, Philippine Christian University and De La Salle Medical Center. Also, emerging commercial and industrial attractions like the Cavite Export Processing Zone, First Cavite Industrial Estate and Gateway Business Park.

THE BEST OF NATURE IN AN IDEAL LOCATION

The most important thing about Ara Vista Village is that it's a community. It's a family community that has just about everything the environment needs to thrive: natural open, it has two lakes, the land that surrounds it is flat.

It all starts with the community's easy access. Just a few minutes drive away from Tagaytay City, considered as the country's summer capital, Ara Vista Village belongs to "the center state of Cavite" as town. Two arterial roads, the Governor's Drive and the Aguinaldo Highway, are within reach. It connects Ara Vista to that Ave Daza to Ave. Hill that allows sea level, which also makes it "flood-proof" by design.

Known for various developments located in two cities around the country, including high rise condominium projects in Manila and Mandaluyong, Phase Two designed Ara Vista Village to be a self-contained community that comes with such landscaped areas, commercial spaces, sports facilities, a Parks court and playground and schools that are available in 5 kilometers.

Residents will have walking as well as running track for a place where they are welcomed. So is wide and fully landscaped sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. Ara Vista Village is also a pet-friendly community, with Petopia and Petwood Trees amenities addressing both owners and the pet.

The main road that has a bicycle lane allows residents to jog and set can go hiking worry-free. The secondary roads, on the other hand, has a 20 meter width, just enough that the one of the main avenue providing trees that in turn can provide shade for hot days and cool breeze on cooler weather.

A GATED HILLS TARGET

All of these amenities does not in any way compromise the beauty and the comfort that one can find in any of the Ara Vista Subdivisions. The features of this gated community are secured and well-landscaped and two-storey houses in convenient parcel of lots Vista Village is unique character. Phase 1 has a Garden Terrace Homes, Garden Villas and Garden Townhouses, which are all designed to maximize natural surroundings for convenience. Designed and intended for mid-up families, the Garden Terrace Collection consists of two bungalow variations in Gardenia and Grace as well as a couple of two-story models in Gardenia and Grace.

On the other hand, the Premier Home Collection is especially designed for those with growing up families. Offering more ample spaces, it has "Premier" versions of Gardenia, Grace, Camia and Camia II, all of which are accessible through gated friendly neighborhoods.

In Ara Vista Village, those two built are intersperse the community, where culture and technology blend seamlessly. Built with Quality, yet affordable homes, it is progressive residential and will be a community that is orderly, full of amenities and loaded with potential and opportunities. And only residents the town of General Trias but also prominent to be considered to benefit from the growth of Cavite.

Whether are decides it that have might away, decides but after this combined getaway to settle Lyceum of the Philippines Ara Vista Village is a good investment from the start.

Pigeons can learn higher math, study suggests

BY MSW, the middle genius of birds is well known. After the Where can pay pound had given verbal skills. Sarah Jays, which birds orders of seeds and other food, have remarkable memories. And New Caledonian crows make and use tools in ways that would put the average home plumber to shame.

Pigeons, it turns out, are no dumbbrains either. It was known that they could count. But all sorts of animals, including bees, can count. Pigeons have now shown that they can learn abstract rules about numbers, an ability which could open had been demonstrated only in primates. In the latest experiment, trained rhesus monkeys to look at groups of items on a screen and to rank them from the fewest to the highest.

Damian Scarf, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Otago in New Zealand, fitted the monkeys' heads with pigeons, and he and two colleagues exposed the untrained birds of the identical items of the pictured Science that the pigeons did just as well as the monkeys. New York Times/Asian Service

WORLD BRIEFS

Pakistan rejects US probe on lethal strikes

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan on Friday rejected a US probe into American strikes that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, prompting Washington to express its regret for the incident. Angela Alliance. "Pakistan's army does not agree with the findings of the US Rules inquiry as being reported in the media. The inquiry report is short on facts," the military said in a short statement. "A detailed response will be given as and when the formal report is received," it said. The inquiry, headed by a US Air Force general, blamed US and Pakistani forces for a series of mistakes that led to "tragic" air strikes on Nov. 26. The deadliest single cross-border attack of the 10-year war in Afghanistan. The US military acknowledged the fatal blue-pigeon and responsibility for the strikes, but insisted their troops responded only after coming under heavy machine-gun and mortar fire, angering Islamabad, which has denied any such firing. AFP

Powerful quakes rock New Zealand's Christchurch

WELLINGTON—The mid-magnitude-devastated New Zealand city of Christchurch was rocked by two powerful 5.8-magnitude tremors on Friday, sending terrified residents onto the streets and forcing the airport to close. The first quake struck at 1.58 p.m. as shops were packed with Christmas shoppers, forcing their festive mood onto panic as shock felt it six minutes. The second 5.8 quake came 75 minutes later as nervous city streets were grid-locked by people desperate to get home. "You can't underestimate the ongoing stress this has created for people," Mayor Bob Parker said, as the city continued to recover from a 6.3-magnitude quake in February that killed 181 people and destroyed much of the downtown. AFP

US rules eased on gun sales to noncitizens

WASHINGTON—The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is relaxing restrictions on the sale of guns to noncitizens because Justice Department lawyers have concluded that the rules lacked legal basis, officials said on Thursday. In a letter to firearms dealers, the bureau said it would soon drop a regulation that bars the sale of guns to noncitizens until they can document that they have lived in a state for at least 90 days. Gun rights groups have long criticized the rule as a burden and a racial address. The letter said the Justice Department had concluded that the Gun Control Act does not empower the ATF to impose a rules requirement on nonalliens gun buyers. The announcement drew criticism from some advocates of gun-control measures, including Sen. David R. Lautenberg, D-N.J., who said that it "defies common sense and puts Americans at risk" because it could make it easier for foreign terrorists to obtain weapons inside the United States. AFP/WS

Oil spill moves toward Nigerian coast

LAGOS, NIGERIA—An oil slick roughly 50 square kilometers in size from a Royal Dutch Shell platform is slowly making its way toward the southern Nigerian coast, threatening wildlife and wetlands downstream, Nigerian officials said on Thursday. Royal Dutch Shell confirmed that the deep-water spill occurred on Tuesday during what the company called a "routine transfer" of crude from a floating storage device in the Bonga oil field. The company said that it would take about 48 hours to stop the spill. The company said that at most about 40,000 barrels had been lost, which would be less than 1 percent of the oil thought to have spurted from the well beneath the Bonga site before closing the subterranean Gulf of Mexico spill in 2010. But Peter Idabor, the head of Nigeria's National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency, said the leakage could be three times as large as Shell currently estimates, far than possibly 's worst cause of oil pollution in 10 years. AFP/WS

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PSALM extends discount to ecozone firms

Awaits open access, retail competition in October 2012

By Amy R. Roces

STATE run Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. will continue to provide discounted electricity rates to economic zone locators up to next year, a move seen to help boost the competitiveness of Philippine manufacturers.

In a statement issued yesterday, PSALM president and CEO Emmanuel Ledesma Jr. explained that the corporation has finally decided to extend its transition supply contract with power distributor Manila Electric Co. for a maximum period of one year or until three months after the introduction of open access and retail competition, whichever comes earlier.

The supply contract, which is being implemented under the Incentive Rate Program (IRP), was supposed to lapse on Dec. 25 this year.

According to Ledesma, the decision to extend the transition supply contract with Meralco was made to ensure the stability of electricity prices charged to consumers.

The decision was reached with the approval of the PSALM board, which consists of the heads of the department of energy, finance, and trade and industry, he added.

Ledesma clarified that PSALM decided to reconsider its decision due to various factors, which included the deferment of the implementation of open access and retail competition to October next year.

Meralco is still in the process of securing the approval of the Energy Regulatory Commission for its bilateral power supply contracts with private generating compa

PSALM, B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Dec. 20, 2011
43.470

STOCK MARKET
Dec. 20, 2011
1.78

Stocks up on yearend buying

MOST local stocks firmed up for the sixth straight session yesterday, aided by yearend window-dressing and favorable news on the US economy.

The main index Philippine Stock Exchange index added 1.78 points or 0.04 percent to finish at 4,312.24, erasing almost all its some-time losses considered to profit-taking. For the week, the broad-stock benchmark crept higher by 87.3 points or 1.5 percent.

All counters traded in positive territory except for consumer, holding and telecommunications.

There were 84 gainers that outnumbered 63 decliners while 43 stocks were unchanged. Foreign buying also persisted in large selling by PSEi utilities, helping push the index higher.

Among the blue chips that joined the main index were Ayala Land, SM Investments, Metrobank, DMCI, Manila Water, Ayala Corp., and BPI. Among the non-index stocks that traded higher or heavy trade were Petrogen, APC and Lepanto.

Two stocks affiliated with the group of businessman Wilson Ee Sr. were among the day's top gainers. Philippine Estates Corp. (PHES) and Wellex Industries (WIN) surged 19.09 percent and 10.57 percent, respectively. Jun Ng and Gelbolingo Abut

STOCKS, B2

2 PPP projects approved

By Nico T. Ditchoso

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority board the approved two infrastructure projects that will enhance the country's trade activities in Southeast Asia and improve the quality of education in the country.

The Nedia identified the projects as the Public-Private Partnership for School Infrastructure Project (PSIP) and the Pasig-Marikina Interior Expressway Project (PMIEP).

The PSIP, which will be implemented by the Department of Education, is estimated to have a total project cost of P9.807 billion.

The PMIEP will involve the construction of 8.623 class

PPP, B2

Power Situation Outlook
for Saturday, 24 December 2011

	7,239	1,750	1,330
	6,063	1,391	1,109
	1,176	467	149

Canon
Delighting You Always

Ongpin group completes acquisition of PBCom

Common, preferred shares bought for ₱4.7B

By Doris C. Dumlao

A GROUP led by former Trade Minister Roberto "Bobby" Ongpin yesterday completed its acquisition of a 97-percent stake in Philippine Bank of Communications via special block transactions at the local stock exchange worth ₱4.7 billion.

Based on a memorandum posted by the Philippine Stock Exchange, Ongpin's takeover was carried through the purchase of 47.099 million common shares and 129 million preferred shares both at ₱27.00 per share.

The block of common shares was worth about ₱1.31 billion, while the separate block of preferred shares was worth ₱3.34 billion.

PBCom's only block title Metro controlled is a nice message that this development represented the official transfer of control of the bank to Ongpin's group from the former major shareholders—the Cheng, Lay and Webb families.

Ongpin and MBC Communications Corp. had been selected by the shareholders to come in as the bank's "third party" investor. The win in line with the commitments of trading shareholders to the state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., which bailed the banks rehabilitation in 2004.

The entry of Ongpin's group had been approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The transaction has also been exempted by the Securities and Exchange Commission from the mandatory tender offer but as PBCom's common shares are now trading at a higher price, having run up in the stock market ahead of the expiry of a new stockpile investor may tender offer at the same block price of ₱27.00 per share to minority stockholders.

PBCom's common shares fell by 1.7 percent to ₱26.50 per share yesterday, but preferred shares are listed but not actively traded in the local stock exchange. Its preferred shares last changed hands at the local bourse in 2007 at ₱28 per share.

With the completion of the transaction, Lucio, which recently made a substantial stake in Japanese Telecommunications Philippines Inc., has acquired through PBCom a banking franchise with a 64-branch network and a niche middle-market Chinese clientele base.

PBCom is the 22nd largest universal bank in the country with assets of about ₱463.8 billion as of the end of 2010.

Ongpin, the local partner of British fund Schroder which has been investing heavily in the Philippines in the last few years, is also part of the group that holds the controlling stake in conglomerate San Miguel Corp. The group also has interests in real estate development (Alphaland Corp.), mining (Mt. Big Wedge Co. Inc.), information technology and printing (Philweb Corp.) and oil refinery (Petron Corp.).

The BSP recently approved the staggered liberalization of branch expansion within Metro Manila in the next three years. This means that the existing banking players, it has become less compelling to make an acquisition for the sole purpose of expanding branches. But this year's major like Ongpin, PBCom's existing banking franchise was a ticket to instantly into the banking business.

Cebu Pacific adds flights to key destinations

By Paolo G. Montecillo

BUDGET carrier Cebu Pacific has added more frequencies to several key flights to cope with the spike in demand during the holidays.

In a statement, the Gokongwei-led carrier said it would increase the number of daily flights between Manila and Hong Kong starting this week up to Jan. 3 next year, noting that the Chinese city had become one of the most preferred tourist destinations of Filipinos travellers.

This brings the number of flights between Manila and Hong Kong to five a day, the airline said.

The company also added flights to Kalibo, Aklan, from Manila and to Cotabato from Cebu "to accommodate the influx of visitors to the annual festivities of Ati-atihan, one of Asia's top festivities."

One daily trip each was also added to flights between Cebu and Davao, Davao and Iloilo, Manila and Cebu, Manila and Davao, Manila and Tacloban, and Manila and Dumaguete.

As it prepared for the busiest time of the year, the airline also noted it is reminder to passengers to prepare to avoid early-flight airport security and forget cuts in most Filipino lives.

The airliner said its latest internal figures showed that December 2011 bookings increased by 23 percent, driven by a 27-percent growth in international sales.

"We added flights to meet the load and these sign passengers can take advantage of the holiday season and cost low fares," Iyog said.

Cebu Pacific is the largest airliner in the Philippines based on passenger numbers.

Chinatrust seeks delisting from PSE

CHINATRUST Commercial Bank (CTBC Philippines) has brought its delisting from the Philippine Stock Exchange effective Feb. 28 next year in a move to invest in being fully privately owned.

The bank hopes to complete soon an offer to reduce the share of minority investors.

The subsidiary of Taiwan's largest bank Chinatrust Commercial Bank has declared to seek delisting and go back to being fully privately owned due to the PSE's requirement for all listed companies to widen their public float to at least 15 percent.

Based on the bank's regulatory filing, it has allocated ₱50 million out of its undistributed retained earnings to buy back the minority shares. The amount also covers the costs, fees and associated expenses arising from the buyback.

As of Nov. 30, Chinatrust's publicly-owned shares represented only 8.89 percent of outstanding stock. The holders of these shares are given the option to sell to the bank their shares at ₱26.14 per share.

SEE: Rina Rey Capital Partners sets to the savings of the banks' office which will run from Dec. 27 this year to Jan. 27 next year. The shares are intended to be issued on the PSE on Feb. 3, subject to PSE approval.

"The public offer rules gave the bank the opportunity to restructure its long-term goals and objectives and align them with those of its parent bank's other foreign branches and subsidiaries," Chinatrust president Mark Chen said in the regulatory filing.

By delisting from the PSE, the bank is also declaring its plan to become a universal bank despite having earlier obtained authority from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to upgrade.

The upgrade to universal banking is subject to certain requirements, including having a public float of at least 10 percent.

The bank believes that it has a strong capital position and that it can still pursue its strategic objectives without being a publicly listed entity. At the same time, it will "improve with a simplified ownership structure and strong parent bank support...Bernie L. Dumlao

PSALM extends discount to ecozone

From page B1

sion that are intended to replace the original five-year transition supply contract with PSALM, which was supposed to expire this month.

Ledesma added that without the approved bilateral contracts and the transition supply contract, Meralco would be exposed to volatile market prices Meralco had to recourse but to acquire its supply from the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market where prices tend to be higher at times, Ledesma explained.

Meralco would then have to pass on the higher costs to its estimated one million customers, a situation that the government wanted to avoid, he further said.

"The extension of the TSC is mainly for the benefit of the companies operating in the economic zones enjoying discounted power rates," Ledesma said.

The decision addressed the request of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and the Semiconductors and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc. to retain the power rate discount inside the economic zones in order to hamper the investment climate in the country and displace millions of investors employed in these companies.

Ledesma pointed out as well that the extension of the TSC for the benefit of the residents location was also part of an investment stimulus package that the national government was finalizing.

The discounted power rates offered to investors under the EPZ is believed to be benefiting 279 Filipino exclusively industrial areas, which account for 45 percent of the country's total manufacturing exports or about $10 billion.

2 PPP projects approved

From page B1

rooms within one-story and two-story buildings for 2,300 elementary and secondary schools in Region I (Ilocos), III (Central Luzon) and IV-A (Calabarzon).

"The project will expand the supply of classrooms in all public school systems in the shortest time possible and solve the current shortage nationwide," said Economic Planning Secretary Governor Ed Pedrosa.

Pedrosa said the PBP could help bolster the supply and demand of classrooms within 10 years and eliminate the backlogs and shortages considering the phenomenon of the 4+1 program,

Given the current classroom shortage of 66,800 units that is projected to balloon to about 158,000 by 2016, it is estimated that around 10,000 classrooms are needed annually within the next five years.

"The proposed to carry out the project within the Public Private Partnership framework is expected to benefit both the contractors and delivery of classrooms, reduce cost for government and introduce innovation in design, construction methods and new materials," said Pedrosa, who is also Media director general.

Stocks up

From page B1

they could benefit from the prospective development of the power sector since Finance Cite Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala and Metrobank Chairman Jesus Arranz are involved in talks with the prospective investor Ayala Land Inc. But they did not rule out a potential involvement in the future. In case they will be part of the project, they said they would "make a decision in an appropriate time."

On the other hand, the PSE's gains for the day were tempered by profit taking on ALL SEC, ESC, PLDT, SGI, Megaworld, Metro Pacific International, Philex Mining, UBC and First Gen.

Bernie L. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

CURRENCIES

Fitch cuts 2012 growth outlook for Asia to 6.8%

SINGAPORE—Global ratings agency Fitch on Friday cut its 2012 growth outlook for Asia to 6.8 percent from 7.4 percent previously, citing the weak global economy.

For 2011, the region is seen growing at 7.2 percent, it said in an emailed statement.

The downgrade was also to reflect the impact of policy tightening measures in some of the region's economies, notably China and India, where soaring inflation has led to a major government push to cool down growth.

It expects China's economy, the world's second biggest, to grow 8.2 percent next year instead of the 9.5 percent it meant to in June, while it tipped India to expand 7.5 percent in the year to March 2013, instead of 8.2 percent previously estimated.

"The reduction partly reflects weakening in the outlook for the advanced economies since June," Fitch said. "In addition, the policy drive by the region's policy authorities in response to stubbornly high inflation, including China and India."

"Both China and India face a combination of slowing activity and stubbornly high inflation, underlining the risks that can arise from allowing inflation to rise above desired ranges."

Major regional sources have been hard hit year as the ongoing debt crisis and economic stagnation in the United States and still-modest high inflation by the impact of policy tightening in a number of Asian countries in response to stubbornly high inflation, including China and India.

"Both China and India face a combination of slowing activity and stubbornly high inflation, underlining the risks that can arise from allowing inflation to rise above desired ranges."

Fitch said that despite the still positive growth outlook for Asia Pacific, the economies in the region will manage to ease offset amid an unfavorable global economic environment.

It said that sufficient liquidity in the Asia-Pacific economies as well as adequate room to loosen limits in the region to cut interest rates will help support efforts to achieve a decent economic growth rate.

For the Philippines, the economy among economists is that it will grow next year by 3-4 percent.

Fitch said that considering the still positive growth outlook for Asia Pacific economies as well as the adverse impact of the debt crisis in the Euro zone, the credit ratings for countries in the region are expected to remain stable.

The Philippines is rated by Fitch one notch below investment grade.

The Philippines aims to get an investment grade rating by 2013, claiming improving fiscal and monetary conditions.

The Philippines boosted by Filipinos had offset the country's rising reserves of foreign exchanges, supported largely by remittances from overseas Filipino workers, which the Department of Finance has cited this weekend government's declining budget deficit.

The two agencies said the increase in reserves of foreign exchange and the reduction of the budget deficit enhance the country's ability to survive its outstanding obligations with foreign creditors.

Just recently, Fitch upgraded Indonesia to investment grade, citing the country's favorable macroeconomic indicators.

The Philippines said it economic investment grade ratings as well, noting that financial analysts actually deem the Philippines to be more creditworthy than Indonesia as reflected by the lower interest rates on Philippine sovereign bonds. AFP Michelle U. Remo

Asian shares higher on favorable US data

SINGAPORE—Asian stocks rose more than 1 percent and US index futures also gained on Friday, as signs of a strengthening economy in the United States encouraged a year-end bounce by riskier assets.

European shares were also expected to open higher, helped by a 0.8 percent rise in S&P 500 index futures after a positive US jobless report helped to ignite fresh US trading sessions.

Wall Street stocks had risen by a third straight day on Thursday, leaving the S&P 500 index virtually flat for the year, after data showed new claims for unemployment benefit dropped to their lowest in five years.

The euro crept higher, but remained subdued amid doubts over whether this week's European Central Bank tender of cheap loans will be effective enough to ease the financial strain on banking sector economies.

"The highlight is the continuation of good data on the US economy. China also seems to have managed to cushion a soft landing...," said Ong Seng Yeow, market analyst with Quantshare in Sydney. "The problem child is still Europe."

MSCI's broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan rose 1.1 percent, with Australia's benchmark index down 0.6 percent after a strengthening rally from more than 1 percent. Tokyo's financial markets were closed for a holiday.

Asian share markets, both developed and emerging, have sharply underperformed US stocks in 2011, with the MSCI Asia ex-Japan losing 17 percent, and the Nikkei share average down about 18 percent, while Australia's benchmark has lost about 12 percent.

The MSCI World index fared slightly better, losing only 10 percent this year.

Citigroup equity strategists said in a note that Asia had seen its worst December fund outflows in 20 years as investors continued to pull money out of global equity funds.

The index crawled up to around $1.3007, from $1.3090 late in New York, in thin trade. The IGR's chief euro trader at Australia Bank Group said in a report "All good positive economic headlines are lapped and all poor headlines are ignored. Bears seem unable to keep the $1.30 handle."

The euro was also supported by a report from Reuters that Japan's Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) is considering increasing the proportion of its assets it holds in foreign currencies, including the euro, in a move that could help the euro.

Against the yen, the euro was at 99.60 yen, from 99.70 yen late in New York.

The dollar was at 76.80 yen, from 76.85 yen late in New York.

Against a basket of currencies, the dollar was at 79.600, from 79.650 late in New York.

Gold was at $1,599.50 an ounce, from $1,600.50 late in New York.

Oil prices were at $98.50 a barrel, from $98.60 late in New York.

Copper was at $7,900 a tonne, from $7,900 late in New York.

Reuters

A PEDESTRIAN walks past a new artwork by British graffiti artist Banksy on the outside of a building in east London. Britain's economy grew by a higher-than-expected 0.6 percent in the third quarter, a revised estimate from the Office for National Statistics showed on December 22. Finance minister George Osborne insisted that there will be no let-up in the coalition's plans to cut Britain's huge deficit and reset clear of the global debt storm. AFP

US jobless claims drop

WASHINGTON—The number of Americans filing new claims for jobless benefits fell a 16-month low last week, bolstering views the economy was gaining momentum, even though third-quarter growth was revised down.

Labor data on Thursday underscored the thinking rose in the economy, with consumer sentiment ending a six-month high in December, and a boomerang of future activity rising for a seventh straight month in November.

While the economy is wrapping up 2011 with a spring in its step, bickering over budget policy in Washington and the debt crisis in Europe have cast a cloud over its prospects next year.

A payroll tax cut and benefits for the long-term unemployed, both of which are due to expire at year end, have become mingled in partisan politics, and it is unclear whether they will be renewed.

"The economy is entering 2012," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pennsylvania. "If Congress doesn't roll that by failing to extend the tax breaks, we can look forward to a down year ahead."

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped 4,000 to 364,000, the lowest level since April 2008, the Labor Department said.

The claims data, which covered the survey period for the December nonfarm payrolls report, helped to calm the gains part of a separate report showing the economy expanded at only a 1.8 percent annual rate in the third quarter.

Growth, which had previously been reported to have expanded at a 2 percent pace, was held back by a sharp drop in healthcare spending, the Commerce Department said.

A month ago, it had said healthcare spending had risen.

However, spending on long-lasting goods was stronger than previously estimated, indicating consumer demand remained healthy.

Prospects for spending were boosted by the rise in consumer confidence.

The Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan's sentiment index rose to 69.9 from 64.1 in November to measures of both current conditions and future expectations increased.

Reuters

Oil rises to near $100 amid improving US economy

SINGAPORE — Oil prices closed in on $100 a barrel Friday in Asia amid signs an improving US economy will boost demand for crude.

Benchmark crude for February delivery was up 46 cents to $99.90 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The contract rose 86 cents to finish at $99.50 on Thursday.

In London, Brent crude was steady at $107.09 on the ICE Futures exchange.

Crude has jumped from below $93 earlier this week on evidence of a slow but clearly improvement in the US economy.

The number of people applying for unemployment benefits dropped last week to the lowest level since April 2008, the third week in a row that applications fell.

The Conference Board reported that its measure of future economic activity jumped five month, the second straight gain.

"This is a number that just appears to want to go higher," energy consultant and trader Tim Evans Group said in a report. "All good positive economic headlines are lapped and all poor headlines are ignored. Bears seem unable to keep crude from finishing 2011 below $100."

The market is also primed for additional threats to global crude supplies, such as rising tensions between Iran and Western nations over Iran's nuclear power program.

The United States and Europe may bolster sanctions against the world's fourth-crude biggest producer.

"Iran might not positively need the sanctions to be applied and could act unilaterally to embargo supplies," J.P. Morgan said in a report. "We are also concerned about Iraq, where political uncertainties seem to be doing following the US troop pullout."

"We expect Iraq to add about 500,000 barrels a day of new supply per both 2012 and 2013, and any deviation from its present course could have serious implications for global supply."

Trading volume is normally low during the next week as many traders take vacations around the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays.

In other energy trading on the Nymex, natural gas fell 2.6 cents to $3.34 per 1,000 cubic feet. Heating oil rose 0.8 cent to $2.924 gallon, and gasoline futures were up 1.1 cents to $2.88 a gallon.

AP

In volatile 2011, politics, policy loomed large over markets

NEW YORK—Any anyone who makes money by making sense of financial markets, 2011 was a confounding year.

Whether it was Europe's seemingly unsolvable debt crisis, uprisings in the Middle East or the political bickering and growing debt burden that cost the United States its AAA credit rating, investors had to be more nimble than ever to stay ahead of swiftly changing sentiment. When the history books are written, 2011 may go down as the year when political and managed economics, earnings and interest rates as the main factors driving capital markets.

"I can't remember a year where politics had such a big impact on capital markets," said Ron Florence, head of investment strategy at Wells Fargo Private Bank, which oversees $157 billion in assets. "Historically, the worst year of 1987, but that lasted for a day. This has lasted for 365."

Just ask Tony Dwyer, a portfolio manager at FBN Securities, operator of the world's largest bond fund.

For most of his 20-year career, Lonergan's daily trips looked down on making the right call on the US economy. Not anymore.

"Here you've got all these other things in the mix. I've had to use a lot more of my time to focus about a lot more things," he said, noting that Germany, Europe, Chinese and other foreign newspapers are now part of his daily reading regimen.

Not right things to look for in 2012.

Russell Napier, Asia Pacific market strategist at CLSA, a Hong Kong-based brokerage, said he sees a European banking crisis next year that could lead to the nationalization of some banks and push both Europe and the United States into recession.

"The biggie for the politics question, the more volatile the markets," Napier said. "And it isn't going to get any better next year."

What the interaction of politics, economics and finance has meant for investors this year is not immediately apparent.

The benchmark S&P 500 index looks set to finish the year roughly where it began.

That's not remarkable, but short just 2.5 percent against the dollar , hardly what one would expect from a currency some investors fear may not be around much longer.

"But that doesn't begin to describe what investors went through," Thomas said.

According to Jeff Bubis, an analyst at Bianco Securities, the average daily spread between the 10-Y's high and low is August was 3.39 percent.

That's below the average inches-long swings seen after Lehman Brothers collapsed in 2008 but certainly volatile enough to make for very successful cable trading.

Other political behaving were raising the US debt ceiling brought the United States to the brink of default in August and Standard & Poor's stripped the country of its gold-plated AAA rating, weeks more into the fall, when falling rates 12 percent) by the end of September.

Then in October, they abruptly reversed course, rising more than 10 percent.

"It was mind-numbing volatility," Florence said. "Every single headline created a stunning response."

To be sure, 2011 generated a lot of market-moving headlines.

A devastating earthquake in Japan, regime change in Egypt and Libya and Europe's repeated attempts to get ahead of a ever-raising debt crisis sparked wild fluctuations in stocks, commodities, bonds and currencies.

On top of that, activist central bank policies in developed economies and government intervention in foreign exchange markets have kept investors on their toes.

Even now, with barely a week left in 2011, investors can only guess at whether US investment will agree to extend a payroll tax cut for 160 million workers. Economists and businesses fear expiration will hurt an already-fragile economy.

There's even less clarity when it comes to Europe, where multiple attempts to prevent a debt crisis from spreading and to reassure markets have failed.

As the year winds down, low-swing costs for Italy and Spain are close to their euro-era highs and worries about the European banking system remain elevated.

More worrisome, Chinese growth appears to be slowing, which would be arguably worse for big exporters dependent on demand from what is now the world's second-largest economy.

Furthermore, this may prompt Beijing to put the brakes on recent years appreciation, said Paul Schmelzing, currency strategist at Western Union Business Solutions.

That would make it harder for struggling Western economies to boost growth through increased exports.

Reuters

CURRENCY traders watch monitors at the foreign exchange dealing room of the Korea Exchange Bank headquarters in Seoul, South Korea. Asian stock markets rose Friday in thin holiday trading on signs the US economy is improving. The year 2011 is considered a "continuing year" for investors.

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE CAPITAL PROJECTS OF ZAMBALES DISTRICT RURAL ELECTRIC SERVICE COOPERATIVE, INC. (ZAMBECO) I FOR THE YEARS 2011 TO 2013 WITH PRAYER FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY.

ERC CASE NO. 2010-148 RC

ZAMBALES DISTRICT RURAL ELECTRIC SERVICE COOPERATIVE, INC. (ZAMBECO I),
Applicant.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on October 27, 2011, the Zambales District Rural Electric Service Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMBECO I) filed an application for the approval of its capital projects for the years 2011 to 2013 with prayer for the issuance of a provisional authority.

The applicant, ZAMBECO I alleges, among others, that:

1. It is an Electric Cooperative (EC) existing pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 269, with postal address at Poblacion, Lagaylagay, Masinloc, Zambales. It has its franchise with coverage area as per Board Resolution No. 2010-01-0001 dated January 20, 2010 and Board Resolution No. 2010-01-0002 dated January 20, 2010 and Board Resolution No. 2010-01-0003 dated January 20, 2010 and Board Resolution No. 2010-01-0004 dated January 20, 2010 and Board Resolution No.

JUSTICE CORONA IBAY-SOMERA

Peacefully joined her Creator in the morning of December 23, 2011 at the age of 81.

Psalm 27:4-5

One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek Him in His temple. For in the day of trouble He will keep me safe in His dwelling; He will hide me in the shelter of His tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

Justice Corona Ibay-Somera (Court of Appeals, Retired) loving wife, caring mother, doting lola and a dedicated public servant of Quezon City and Villasis, Pangasinan

She is survived by her loving husband, **Bienvenido**, children: **Charlie** and **Nilyn**; **Tes** and **Boy**; **Bong** and **Lani**; **Noel**; **Chris** and **Irene**; **Mary Anne** and **Ray**; and **Randy** and **Jinky**, grandchildren: **Carrissa, Ian, Iris, Carla, Bea, Cyrill, Carlo, Alouise, Patrice, Anton** and **Nica**.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel at 12 G Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment will be on Tuesday, December 27, 2011 at the Himlayang Pilipino after a 10:00 a.m. funeral mass in the Parish of Mary Immaculate Conception on Wisdom St., Carmel Subdivision, Quezon City.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
- 1 copy of death Certificate
- Two identification documents (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
RECORDING
VIDEO / DVD DESIGN

...about how the body is to present with the Lord.
1 Corinthians 15:42

COL. JUAN B. VILLANUEVA, PAF (Ret.)

June 24, 1926 - December 22, 2011

He is survived by his children **Ralph & Blandie, Danny & Heidi, Maritess & Joey, Marsha & Larry** and **Mary**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren and siblings.

His remains will lie in state at the Libingan ng mga Bayani Mortuary, Ft. Bonifacio, Taguig City until December 25, 2011 after which it will be transferred to the family residence in Tampo, Botolan, Zambales on December 26, 2011.

Interment will be on December 29, 2011 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Sta. Monica Parish Church.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Nature R Us (Tanauan) Foundation.

"Don't grieve for me, for I am free
I am following the path God laid for me
Lift up your hearts and share with me
God wanted me now, He set me free."

Our Dearly Beloved

JOSE "Papa Joe" H. VELEZ

joined his Creator on the 21st of December 2011.

His children and grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Manila Wake : Chapel 4 Mortuary and Crematory of the Heritage Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City December 22-24, 2011

Iloilo Wake : San Jose St., Poteran, Iloilo City December 25, 2011 to January 7, 2012

Interment will be at the Poteran Catholic Cemetery.

For further details, you may call Cel. No. 0917-2088308.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

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"Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him." - I Corinthian 2:9

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Editor Cesar G. Mangosong
SCIENCE/HEALTH
Tell us your feedback: Inquirer.Science@gmail.com; fb.me/pi.sci

PH's first world-class science museum to open

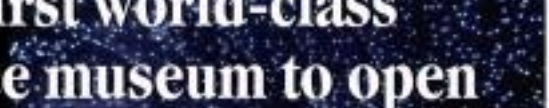
By Tarra S. Samantha

BELIEVING THAT a strong science education in this country can help propel the growth of its economy, the Bonifacio Art Foundation Inc. (BAF) has recently unveiled the country's first world-class science museum.

Dubbed as The Mind Museum, this multifloor project is targeted to be as par with other world-class museums, from its sleek futuristic building design down to the numerous interactive exhibits that will be made available to the public by summer of 2012.

Sitting on a 12,500-square-meter prime lot of the 21 Carmen Park on 3rd Avenue in Bonifacio Global City, the P1-billion project was conceived as early as 2006 by BAF, the group in charge of Bonifacio Global City's public-art programs.

"It is brought to reality by companies, families and individuals who heeded the call to support science education in the country in a way to help economic growth in the long term," BAF officials said in a statement.


GUESTS view the Universe Gallery at the Mind Museum exhibit.

Understanding of science

"It is envisioned to be the Philippines' resource for the public understanding of science where facts are presented in clear, exciting and engaging way," the officials added.

According to BAF, while a number of international experts were tapped as consultants during the planning stage, the Mind Museum was conceptualized and brought to life by an entire team of Filipinos.

"Designs are by Filipino artists working with Filipino scientists and engineers to clearly and beautifully flesh out a science principle or law. Ninety percent of the exhibits was done by carefully selected local fabricators who also do work for science museums abroad," BAF said.

Designed by Ed Calma and his team of architects, the Mind Museum will feature five galleries within its area levels.

VICE President Jejomar Binay and Inquirer Chair Marixi Prieto view the Mind Museum exhibit at BGC.

- "The Story of the Universe: Its Beginning and Majesty" features the vastness of the universe and holds clues to where we came from and where we are going. It also contains a unique planetarium which simulates star-gazing from the point of view of literally leaving Planet Earth and heading into deep space.
- "The Story of the Earth: Its Story Across the Breadth of Time" tells of the story of the planet and our anthropology; it includes a 3D animated film made by an all-Filipino crew that features 4.6 billion years of the planet's natural history and evolution in just 12 minutes.
- "The Story of Life: The Exuberance and Stories of Life" gives viewers a deeper understanding of all life forms — from microbes to large animals (such as a life size "Bernardus") , and from DNA cells to a giant human brain model.
- "The Story of the Atom: The Strange World of the Very Small" has exhibit pieces that show the strange world of the "very small" in terms of forces and particles.
- "The Story of Technology: The Showcase of Human Ingenuity" shows how we, with the tools we invent and innovate, are able to express our evolving humanity.

The Mind Museum will also boast an outdoor "Science-in-the-park," where visitors can experience playful science through four-themed parks on: Music, Math, Living and Water. Other educational offerings include facilities such as an auditorium, laboratories and classrooms for educational workshops.

The ceremonial opening held recently was led by Vice President Jejomar Binay, Quezon City Mayor Lani Cayetano and the board of trustees of BAF, with its chair Jose D. Campos and vice chair Fernando Zobel.

In his message read by Binay for the occasion, President Aquino offered his thanks and congratulations to those who made this feasibility possible through their generous donations.

"Knowing as we do the importance of furthering scientific research and development in the country, we have always timed first in the belief that science is transformational—should be put to work for the benefit of the Filipino people," the President added.

Finding Christ on Christmas

MEDICAL FILES

Rafael Castillo

FIVE DAYS before Christmas Day this week, we celebrated a patient which seems hasn't fallen who has defied medical science with her resiliency.

Although she has been in and out of the hospital for the same problem, her recovery each time continues to amaze us, and humble us, knowing fully well that her medical condition improved not because of the medicines we gave her, but because of some unseen intervention which is beyond the realm of a finite medical answer.

More than 15 years ago, she was diagnosed to have a severe case of cerebrovascular accident (stroke) which rendered her to such that it is literally transformed into a fabby mass of muscle. Her condition progressively worsened such that doctors attending to her including myself forewarned the husband that she would likely not survive beyond five years from the time we diagnosed her.

After her fifth year, we modified our advisory at this family. Four she was being impressed with medical treatment for that anytime she could go. Yet 15 years after our grim prognostication, she remains alive, able to walk and do simple activities of daily living. Many doctors are familiar with her case on her third forty, electrocardiogram, 2D-echocardiogram and other laboratory tests, they think it's a dead patient we're discussing and we pleasantly astonished us we are upon learning that the patient is still alive and enjoying her God-given life extension.

Her mission on earth

Here's a few years ago, we have detained from changing her confinement fee because we felt we do not deserve to be compensated for her astounding recovery each time she goes back into heart failure. It is quite clear to us that she remains alive not because of our medical competence, but because God wants her to remain alive.

"Try to find out what God still wants you to do here on earth," we tell her each time she dramatically recovers from her illness.

We have used the same medicines and other interventions to many patients with the same condition she has, but they eventually die as the goal of scientific evidence has established they would. This particular patient however has defied the statistics.

Her mission to be home with her family this Christmas. When we readmitted her to the hospital, we were not so optimistic than she would get her wish but she did, and even had five extra days before Christmas day excepting being with her family.

True meaning of Christmas

She reminded us the true meaning of Christmas. Christ was born on earth so we all could live from the sure death which our original sin has gladly condemned us to have. And though Christ's birth and death, our sin were washed away as we could be again.

It is unfortunate that many, myself included, sometimes lose focus on what the real meaning of Christmas is. Our Christmas carols have been transformed in modern times from songs reflecting on Christ's birth and life, to love and romantic songs, or even songs about stealing the hearts and not giving their hearts during the holiday season.

A supposedly Christmas Mass celebrated at the Supreme Court by no less than the Manila archbishop had a guest picture of the Chief Justice behind the altar giving rise to the uncanny impression that he was the object of worship of those who participated in the gathering. Although we're sure it was intended as a show of support to the beleaguered Chief Justice and we meant to show disrespect for God, it somehow reflected human tendency to easily get distracted by outshone and screened issues and lose grasp of what the season meant and celebrated for, and we continue to do to honor the true and deserving celebrant of the season.

Religious significance

There is definitely nothing wrong with the popular custom and tradition with which we celebrate the season such as the exchange gifts and greeting cards, attending gala and other Church celebration, Christmas parties, and decorating the Christmas tree. It would be sane though if we could have progress including those in the broadcast media that emphasize more the religious significance of Christmas.

11 points to ponder for a longer life

By Tessa B. Salazar

AS 2011 DRAWS to a close, here are 11 things to think about for a longer, healthier life:

1 There's more to meat than meets the eye. You are what you eat, and oftentimes what you kill can kill you back. Most of modern man's health calamities originate from the plate we consider either our own, small or large daughters/sons and animal farms. Besides those on prohibitions, God only frowns at what industrial chemicals, pesticides and growth hormones are being injected, and new strains of bacteria and viruses are being incubated. Countless interviews with cardiologists, meat inspectors and veterinarians confirm this writer's worst fears, from a former health secretary has warned the public about untreated meat, especially processed meat and animal milk and milk products like butter.

2 Too little greens on the plate. Inside lean, the country's top causes of death are cardiovascular diseases and cancer. This is to be expected of a society that eats too little fruits and vegetables. The Philippines is one of the countries that copy inappropriate habits in Asia — a measly 40 kg as compared to China with 250 kg. The World Health Organization recommends a between 146 and 182 kg. If we just ate enough fruits and vegetables to reach the minimum range, 31 percent of ischemic heart diseases, 19 percent of strokes and 20 percent of stomach cancers could be preserved.

3 Get milk! Not problems. This has something to do with item No. 1. Farm-level cases, in order to speed up their production of milk, are injected with a wide range of drugs, chemicals and hormones. The "best" thing about it is that this is all legal.

4 Processed foods are the bomb. And that's because of the sort of chemicals put into your neighborhood longganisa. Some government veterinarians even call them longganisa embalmado, because of the horrendous amount of nitrate put in to them.

5 The real inconvenience truth: World-wide meat production (beef, chicken etc., pork) emits more atmospheric greenhouse gases than do all forms of global transportation or industrial processes. That's according to researchers at Scientific American in its February 2009 issue. Each human will consume 2,400 farm animals in his/her lifetime. We increase our carbon footprint every time we visit our burgers, bacon, lamb and eggs. Imagine multiplying 2,400 farm animals by 7 billion people on earth.

6 Directly related to item No. 5, livestock production is hard-pressed to meet this demand for meat. Combustion from livestock a primary factor in the destruction of the world's remaining natural rainforests, as cited by Jeremy Rifkin, author of "Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture."

7 Beef and brain disorder. The connection between Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and human was uncovered in Great Britain in the 1990s when scientists found out that a new variant, which was discovered to be a variation of a rare brain disorder called Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), which typically catches elderly people. CJD is a progressive deterioration of the normal status of a patient who may have ingested infected brain from cattle and other livestock. BSE has been implicated to the use of processed beef and infected cow parts as part of cattle feed.

8 Going on a plant-based diet will not make you physically weak. There are a number of vegetarian athletes, even up in Olympic levels all over the world. This writer has met and interviewed Filipino athletes who are vegetarians.

9 There are patients who have recovered their diseases by shifting to a plant-based diet. This entire has met many of them. Check out Heinrich Miranda-Verona, DrPH, MPH, RMD, a nutritionist-dietitian for 25 years if you want to connect with these patients.

10 If you want some power and magic, make them eat fruits and vegetables. A May 2010 documentary article in PlantYou journal described the tangible differences among the brains of vegetarians, vegans and omnivores. The brain, as it was found out, tended to reverse itself toward compassion or empathy to children beings when subjected to a vegetarian diet. The Dalai Lama really possesses the first encouraging evidence of brains wired for compassion when exposed to a meatless diet.

11 There are now 18,000 registered restaurants offering plant-based menus, and they all can be accessed at veganhappy.com.net. Their locations include our very own country, the Philippines. Check out Pinoyvegan Facebook, tips or story links: http://business.inquirer.net/53321/health-vocho-boosts-love-a-runner-diets-a-roll-away and http://downloranstyle.inquirer.net/site-store/20110120-317503/Time-to-Eat-Raw

QUARTET, B7

Quantity, quality and other Christmas considerations

Of Gifts—

JUST IN time for Christmas, a study from American researchers suggests that when it comes to gifts, quantity can definitely trump quality.

The challenge is the "wow factor" that one comes from a study to appear in The Journal of Consumer Research recently buyers might not go for a seller's "best deal, there's more!" package deal. Days of the exemplary card to explain that a seller's "convenient paradox" involved a hotel advertising a five-star pool and a three-star restaurant. The researchers found that study participants who saw an ad featuring the ratings for both the pool and the restaurant expected to pay less for the hotel compared to participants who saw an ad that only featured the five-star pool rating.

In their report, the team said the results from this study could be useful for sellers who may not necessarily be bundling their products, but are focused on making these items as appealing as possible to buyers.

One example of a study item that might be distinguished bundled with something else comes from Swiss scientists, in biography, they demonstrated that they'd developed a process to coat yarn with a very thin layer of 24-karat gold. The resulting fiber has proven flexible enough to work with, leading to the production of a fine line and handkerchiefs. The researchers said their gold fiber could be used to produce other accessories such as handbags, but the gold fiber can't be produced on a large enough scale to generate more than a few hundred or

DISCOVER

Marixie Santos Kalivo

here of the items:

Frankincense—

Another Christmas-themed study comes from an international team of researchers investigating the health of the trees that produce the frankincense used known as one of the gifts from the Wise Men. After two years of analyzing samples from trees in Africa and the Middle East, the team reported that in the next 15 years, the amount of frankincense produced by these trees could be halved, impacting their use for incense and in making perfumes.

Writing in the Journal of Applied Ecology, the researchers primarily attributed the projected decline to goats attacking the trees, but they also noted other factors that keep young trees from thriving in these areas.

and Rice

Regardless of what's being served during the holiday meals, there's likely to be a space on the table for rice. A study published in May by Australian researchers showed that the world's dependence on this crop may be traced back to China, where it was first cultivated nearly 9,000 years ago. The team reported that the two main types of rice—one sticky and short-grained and the other nonsticky and long grained—came from a single wild rice species first cultivated in China.

As the world's population is expected to increase by another billion within the next few decades, it's not surprising that many of the studies published in 2011 focused on improving

QUARTET, B7

CLUBFEET that had undergone the Ponseti method remained strong, durable, pain free and fully functional decades after the procedure.

Real hope for babies born with clubfeet

By Charles E. Bahan

THE APPEARANCE is unmistakable: one (if could be both) foot is turned to the side or that it may even appear that the top is where the bottom should be. The calf and the rest of the involved leg may be smaller and shorter than the normal side.

Though it is not a painful condition, the presence of the clubfoot will lead to significant disability as well as cause debilitating psychological and psychological burden to the child later in life, not to mention severe financial burden on the family.

Dr. Artur Aguilar, organizing committee chair of the 19th Congresbuilder Course Institute of Orthopedics and Rehabilitation, Specific Medicine, explained that doctors can still not explain why it happens, though it can occur in some families with previous clubfoot.

In fact, Aguilar explained that there's a chance of having a clubfoot a twice as likely if the parent the spouse or other children also have it.

Change

"While it has been eradicated in the developed world, it's a different story in the developing world as treatment for most children with clubfoot is simply not available. We want to change this, as we don't want Filipino children with untreated clubfoot have a lifetime of unnecessary congenital, educational and social opportunities," Aguilar said.

While the traditional mode of treatment was the employment of extensive corrective surgery and the application of casts, Aguilar said there is another effective option that no longer needs surgery.

For years, the St. Luke's Medical Center's Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, has been offering the "Ponseti technique," a gentle manipulation of correcting and casting that corrects congenital clubfoot without invasive surgery.

Dr. Ignacio Ponseti developed in the University of Iowa a method that is more than 90 percent effective when used properly by a trained healthcare provider.

"It may now be regarded as the 'gold standard' treatment for clubfoot. But more importantly, decline in underprivileged areas of the country with limited access to surgical facilities can be restored to use the method, helping hundreds and even thousands of Filipino children with without unnecessary," Aguilar said.

During the recent two-day postgraduate course titled "The Ponseti Method for Treatment of Clubfoot", held at at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City, proper casting techniques were demonstrated by doctors Jose Montecillo and William Whitehouse, two experts who headed the international faculty from the the University of Iowa's Ponseti International Association.

With the Ponseti method, the doctor changes the cast every week for several weeks with the aim of stretching slowly the foot toward the correct position.

Once the foot has been corrected, the infant must wear a brace at night for two years to maintain the correction. This extremely effective method also requires the active participation of the parents for the lifetime application.

World's most common

Clubfoot is the world's most common congenital limb defect, affecting more than 200,000 newborns children a year.

It is said that 80 percent of these occurrences happen in developing countries that include the Philippines.

But the fact that famous individuals including former boxing hall superstar Two Alfonso Ward, former actress Jaclyn Jose, Hollywood actor Ronald Gilbert and former Olympic figure skating champion Edith Hamilton suffered from this condition only proves what an early intervention could do in the life of any young child.

Since the clubfoot can be corrected by Ponseti technique in two months or less with minimal or no surgery. The method is easy to learn, inexpensive and suited for both developed and developing countries like the Philippines. A long-term follow-up study has showed that for those had undergone the Ponseti method remain strong, flexible, pain free and fully functional decades after the procedure, Aguilar said.

From page 5B

family get-together can include reading of the story of Christ's birth from the Bible. This can make a wonderful family tradition that can underscore to the children the true meaning of Christmas.

As one Christian Christmas song goes: "It's not Christmas, till we find its true meaning, the birth of Christ, to bring love and peace on earth."

Christmas is also a good occasion to share with people in need. The recent calamity in Mindanao, somewhat jolted us and made us wonder why disasters like it could happen a week before Christmas. But the silver lining is to that many people rose up to the occasion to help their brethren in the need. Many received their Christmas parties to donate the money to the typhoon victims. There were also those who, for the sacrifice, humility and love to follow suit—the very same elements in the original Christian message which Jesus Christ has restored with his birth on earth.

We wish everyone a truly meaningful Christ@Christmas.

Finding Christ . . .

Quantity, quality . . .

From page 5B

ace's tolerance for conditions such as salinity, heat and drought in order to improve their yields and even their ideal conditions. One report published in November came from a Japanese company that described a technique for growing rice in the tsunami-ravaged paddies by counteracting the higher salt concentrations with the help of a popular artificial sweetener.

Another study from the same month focused on a Chinese practice of raising carp in rice paddies. The hitchhiker plants several days without the aid of pesticides or fertilizers. The recognition of the ecological legacy of these traditional agricultural systems and the integration of these unique experiences into our future farm designs could help us to develop more sustainable agriculture, that means more in these report published online Nov. 30 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA.

E-mail the author at bsantos@inquirer.com.

Pinoys may find another reason to 'fall' for Bataan

By Theresa S. Lasconiga

LIKE SEOUL-ING in old Rome, Ayala Land Premier has given Filipinos another reason to relocate and fall for Bataan.

Famed for its rich history that celebrated the heroism and hardships of Filipinos and American soldiers during World War II, Bataan is now much famous for its resorts beaches and resorts luring its patronage—a notch up its appeal. But is it sweet love-at-first-sight-worthy?

The flurry of developments that have sprung up in the province, however, has given local and foreign investors alike with crucial choices—from the style of amenities and facilities to recreational activities.

Is there for you find that "distinct leisure experience"?

Ayala Land Premier resorts tourists will "fall" in love with Bataan through its private residential leisure development Anvaya Cove.

Exclusive enclave

The 330-hectare exclusive enclave, nestled against the Bataan and Zambales mountain ranges, promises exciting and leisure members a unique leisure experience of paramount exclusivity, premium resort amenities and most notably, proximity to a thriving regional hub known as Subic Bay Freeport.

Cadlyn Moya, Ayala Land Premier head for residential business and leisure, explained that the Anvaya Cove complemented Subic's own development and evolution as one of the country's most comprehensive business, commercial and leisure destination.

Rising regional hub

"As it stands, Subic's accessibility and attractiveness, which blends seamlessly with the province's natural topography and rich history, defines it as a rising regional hub. Anvaya Cove is a key player in this development as part of our overall vision to establish natural-born growth centers in key parts of the country," Moya added.

At the same time, Ayala Land ensures to protect and preserve Anvaya's natural surroundings and its immediate environs with the creation of properties—a core founder up for urban living.

The idea behind Anvaya Cove, according to Moya, is to create spaces where residents are able to enjoy a "leisure experience" through the elements that can be found only within this Ayala development.

Newest neighborhood

Proudly described as having a distinct barkwise where mountains meet the sea, Anvaya Cove is said to offer possibilities not found anywhere else—a perfect setting that can be best experienced through the Sea Breeze Veranda, its newest neighborhood.

Located at the highest ridge within the Anvaya Cove community, this low-rise residential development provides residents a move-in suite for convenient and hassle-free living.

"Given the virtue of its location, each unit in the Sea Breeze Veranda will have spacious balconies which residents can host cozy dinner beds surrounding and panoramic views of the golf course and the South China Sea, as well as the Bataan and Zambales mountain ranges," Moya said.

Residents of the Sea Breeze Veranda can also make the most out of the exclusive amenities such as a landscaped garden and a swimming pool built on its generous open grounds.

Housekeeping services of the Anvaya Cove Beach and Sports Club can likewise be availed by unit owners to ensure the ease and efficiency of maintaining each Sea Breeze Veranda unit.

Rising demand

According to Ayala Land Premier, the development features of this resort development within the Anvaya Cove are so fast, well-received by the market. Even more so now that Ayala has made it easier for hangouts to own a property within Anvaya Cove.

Due to the rising demand, the Sea Breeze Veranda launch last year is now followed by the launch of the Beach Veranda.

Ayala however pointed out that what the Sea Breeze Veranda is offering fulfilled not one facet of what the whole Anvaya Cove development can provide to its exclusive community.

Into that "complete leisure experience," Anvaya Cove's permanent residents are treated to well-appointed amenities that can answer with modern yet nature-friendly activities, including its very own Anvaya Cove Golf and Sports Club—an 18-hole all-weather championship course set. Other guests can enjoy a variety of leisure activities, ranging through open-air golf clinics, sports events and a beach and nature club.

APPEAL: Cove is a 330-hectare exclusive enclave, nestled against the Bataan and Zambales mountain ranges

Alternatives to local hardwood

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Arciaga/ Lifestyle

OOPS, WE did it again. I was shocked but not surprised, when I heard that Typhoon Sendong (Washi) ravaged Northern Mindanao. Finally, photos showed up on the newspapers a day or two later with what I dreaded: images of logs washed ashore, obviously those that were illegally felled in the rivers with the raging floodwaters. I hardly saw what I saw in the paying to see lo-cod.

Every so many years, it's the same tragic scenario: heavy rainfall, flash floods, deaths. It wasn't because of the Monday's massive submerge 80 percent of Metro Manila, and before that in 2004, the mudslides and floods in Infanta, Quezon. And who'll forget the deadly floods in Leyte a few years prior to that? Other than the heavy rainfall, a common factor for calamities where so people die is the fact that the floods happened at least hours that crushed the mountain ranges. And of course, the main culprit, the one of our shore, is the relentless illegal loggers.

Precious trees

Whatever happened to the logbes? Does imagine him now—trekking there, point, chainsaw in hand, mask resting down, sweats, sad, very likely, convicted by a political kingpin. The entity that demolish our forests, taking our precious trees from the mountains. There's no use of blaming our forefathers, those who sacrifice, humility and love to follow suit—the very same elements in the original Christian message which Jesus Christ has restored with his birth on earth.

We wish everyone a truly meaningful Christ@Christmas.

What we don't realize, every time we use local hardwood is that a mahogany takes at least 20 years to mature into an economically sized tree of timber. Ideally though, it should be given 20 to 30 years to grow into truly valuable logs. We don't seem to comprehend that it literally takes decades to grow hardwood trees, where it has also grown in years sufficiently long and plenty enough to latch on to the soil, and deep enough to take its toxin so that the soil is where people and wild not come down with intolerance or torrent of flood during a heavy downpour.

Unlike developed countries, our local hardwood industry is so badly regulated, that it is difficult to verify the traceability of claims by sellers of old or recycled wood. There's no system of certifying wood whether it is from a recycled source or not. Selling wood grown from tree farms, quite a long shot for us, since the approvals of farming timber is quite new in this country.

Tested options

To be fair, there are people who so badly want to use hardwood alternatives, but don't know where to start looking. The current market presents many products that are alternatives to exotic hardwood, especially kinds of low-hazard timber, or of treated wood, or of composite wood material. But realize, here's a short list of tested options to explore:

Arctic Wood Products Inc. sells cut-sized two-dressed, treated evergreen from Pine, the most used species of trees in Finland. Their timber can be used for general timber construction work, built-in structural and decorative or finishing timber like framing, paneling and flooring. Contact them through Tel. +632-4427586, Telefax +632-3227886 or send e-mail to: kaisa0108@gmail.com.

Kaufman Homes and Pinoys sells a wood agglomerate that works as an excellent substitute for natural wood. The material can be worked and treated like any natural timber product, and it probably more long lasting considering its water-resistant. Contact them through Tel. +632-4427586, Telefax +632-3227886 or send e-mail to kaisa0108@gmail.com.

Central Lumber Corp. sells Antaswood, a natural timber from Radiata Pine which is kiln-dried in New Zealand. It is prepared with a high pressure treatment that keeps it from rotting or termite invasion. Contact them through Tel. +632-4427586, TeleFax +632-3127766 or send e-mail at rsecondado@phlfel.com.

Third, provide yourself as be a connoisseur when you harbor local hardwood flooring, like our beloved narra, tanguile and molmol are too long ago. There's already was much "green-washing" in the building industry, until we realize that cumulatively, we create the problem, therefore let us end to this mind-set, the Good and the dreadful. Or another, which couldn't be the saddest truth—we really just don't care.

THE WONDERS OF LOCAL HARDWOOD ALTERNATIVES. Ayala Land Premier President's Friends Plaza is a good case for distinctive applications. Other wood alternatives, such as agglomerates (timber, can be worked with by a carpenter just like it were real timber.

Contact the author through designdimensions@yahoo.ph or through our facebook fan page Facebook account.

Public art

From page 5B

decade include clear guidelines against which major new developments are judged with regard to the competition of public art.

To counteract the standardized approach to design and development, the Detroit Institute developed the concept of allocating one percent of the development costs for incorporating works of art starting in Philadelphia in 1959. It soon was adopted in many other large cities including New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

Public art is not as much a part of street life in many cities like Chicago's Picasso statue of sculpture, Toronto's monumental sculpture of Henry Moore beside the iconic gallery designed by architect Frank Gehry and the Medici sculpture around the Louvre in Paris.

It is delightful to find Filipino artist' works abroad such as Ramon Orlina's glass sculptures in Singapore.

We have other world-class artists and upcoming young Filipino artists who can very well help promote quality public art in our cities and towns.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail arbalcazar@gmail.com.

Editor Cesar D. Mangosing
PROPERTY

2012 seen as banner year for tourism, hotel sectors

By Tessa R. Salazar

(CONTINUED FROM B7)

WHAT WOULD be on the up-and-up the coming year? Inquirer Property continues the fearless forecast of the real estate industry for 2012:

1 Emerging trends will spring up from various economies in 2012. Fueled in great part by historical marketing, Property analysts also see pocket developments in non-central business districts, while competition will shift to the home-buying experience, which, says Enrique Soriano, professor at the Ateneo Graduate School of Business and various advisor at Pricing+Investment Business Advisory, would revolve around hybrid residences, live-and-work projects, home sales that travelers must likely to "break out" and make themselves known, would be Boracay, Legaspi and Cebu.

2 London will continue to lead in cost in cities and emerging growth corridors. Condominiums in cities would gain on subdivisions and related housing developments in 2012. Soriano says this pattern for mid class will likely to be sustained in 2012. Aside from the NCR and Cebu, specific locations in the country where condos would most likely to gain a dominant foothold over locating would be emerging CBDs and regional growth centers such as Davao, Iloilo, Bacolod and Legaspi-Sorsogon-Tabaco. Top leisure destinations would still be Boracay and Baguio.

3 It would also be the office sector's busiest year. Nick Santos, chair and CEO of CBRE Philippines, and Victor Antonino, executive director for Global Research & Consultancy, are optimistic of businesses process outsourcing companies, shared services and still remote would continue as economies tighten in the West (United States and Europe). They also add the expansion of BPOs in the North (such as Clark and Subic), opening of the first unrestricted GEZE Gold for Zero-% Shell Building in Makati—The Twelfth Building, and the upcoming public relation of Brookside Global City and Makati in the office sector in the next two years.

4 More tourism-related developments to rise in 2012. Paul Vincent Chua, executive director for valuation and advisory services and head of consultancy and research of Colliers International, says: "We will see a lot more tourism-related developments as we strive to enhance the beauty of the Philippines on the international scene and get more tourists to visit us."

Chua says major developers and investors are now studying the impact of the country's international gateways through improved marketing efforts of the Department of Tourism, and recently the inclusion of Palawan's Underground River as one of the Seven Wonders of Nature would also showcase the Philippine's other natural beauty.

Related to tourism would be the gaming business, and as evidenced by the success of Resorts World, there would be more such establishments. Chua foresees, since Pagcor's Entertainment City gives rise to more world-class hotels and resorts.

"What is critical now is how the government will answer the growing concerns on the public-private partnerships (PPP) complexity in the infrastructure and transport sector, which are equally important to tourism. We also need to verify quickly the concerns on our international airport, which is still rated as one of the worst in the world. In a land-locked issue would be the problem of international visitors leaving the country as one of its hubs is Asia. This would cause inefficiency of costs to both traveler and locals who are also traveling to other parts of the world," Chua says.

5 Hotel and leisure sector will be dynamic in 2012. The expected growth in tourist arrivals, and with the advent of the gaming sector to the country, growth in hotels and leisure establishments would naturally follow, according to Soriano and Asuncion.

CBRE observed that major developments sprouting in the Bay Area such as Pagcor City and Belle Grande, Cosmo Resorts Manila have added significantly more investments in the gaming industry. The continued growth of the office sector has prompted new branded hotel projects such as Shangri-La at Boulevard Global City, the Grand Hyatt and Intercontinental.

Investments and development in residential apartments have been spurred by the increase in medium-term staying business travelers such as BPO (business process outsourcing) trainees and consultants.

The expansion of the tourism sector will also be seen in Cebu and the Visayas region as more residential and office developments begin, driven primarily by the BPO operations in the region.

The expansion of the liberalized airline industry signals more foreign carriers to come in, she says, for example has provided cheaper alternatives for international travel to cloud tourism.

The convergence of foreign tourist arrivals, coupled with growth in domestic tourists traveling across the archipelago, has triggered new hotel development in key tourist destinations. This trend will continue in 2012, with certain prime locations to enjoy more prominence, such as Boracay, Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Palawan, Clark and Subic.

Foreign investments into retail facilities will also bode well for the resurgence of the Philippines as a major medical tourism destination. Upgrading and expansion of tertiary hospitals provide options and alternatives to medical tourists as well as creating revenue like hotel spaces.

6 Live-work-play projects will exclusively prosper in Metro Manila and other major urban cities. Chua says there will be more mixed-use developments as a key strategy for developers, as the will maximize the returns on a large plot of land.

"This would mean a continued focus on the live-work-play concept started by Megaworld, predominantly in Metro Manila and other highly urbanized cities. We also saw successful launches of condominium in Ayala Land and Megaworld's Arca South, which will continue in 2012. Related to mixed-use developments are retail developments in Metro Manila, or even a lot of vertical developments with retail positions on the ground floor. However, since super regional and regional malls have about 95-percent occupancy rate in Metro Manila, we still see more expansions geographically," Duan explains.

7 CBRE Philippines also predicts the high-end residential sector to become more popular in 2012.

8 Growth of mid-income residential developments in 2012. Asuncion observed that young urban dwellers and working families have fueled the growth and expansion of mid-to-lower vertical subdivision developments (i.e. condominium) across Metro Manila with concentration on the peripheries of business districts. This trend would most likely continue in 2012.

9 Continued demand in retail sector in 2012. CBRE Philippines sees the following to continue in 2012:

- Retail expansion for neighborhood centers, supermarkets, hypermarkets and malls to continue across the country with new retail developments from Ayala Land, SM Prime, Robinsons Retail, Puregold Price Club, Rustan's and Walter-mart about to become operational.
- Increased expenditures for dine-outs, or food consumed outside home, would fuel the expansion of fast food chains, retail kiosks as well as beverage shops such as coffee, milk tea and frozen yoghurt.

10 More industrial and logistics investments in the Philippines in 2012, a response to China go up, and in the aftermath of the Thailand floods. Such developments have caused more manufacturing plants and facilities to relocate and open in the Philippines. CBRE Philippines says these indicators in 2012 portend continued growth in 2012.

PUBLIC ART has a major role in creating livable and vibrant communities by making places distinctive and ideas thinkable like this sculpture by Henry Moore in Toronto, Canada.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE / GREG BAKER/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Public art

GREEN ARCHETRENDS

Amanda de Leyna

IN 1961, a 10.5-meter stainless steel palace was unveiled. The unexpected over the granite obelisk of the Rizal monument in Luneta. It was meant to serve as a guide for incoming boats and ships and for people lost in their way around the city.

The remodeling was widely criticized. "Grandiose," "nightmarish" and "ill-suited to monument" were some of the decries remarks used by critics.

Many disliked the idea of tampering with a traditional image of the Rizal monument, designed by a then sculptor named Richard Hosking, and memorialized in stamps, books, currency and souvenirs.

The P145,000 shaft was eventually removed two years later. Until a few years ago, it was used as a city boundary marker on Roxas Boulevard.

The Rizal monument controversy is perhaps the most controversial public art here in the country. Other less known public art, especially in Metro Manila, are stunning or surprising, while some are really unpleasant and look misplaced.

Such is the state of public art in the country.

What is public art?

Public art is any work of art sited or designed in public areas usually outside buildings and is accessible to all.

Public art has a major role in creating livable and vibrant communities by making places distinctive and identifiable. It is a highly cost-effective way of driving economic revitalization in urban areas. It encourages partnership between artists, architecture, design professionals, developers and local communities.

It has been proven to help stimulate the local economy by generating jobs for artists, manufacturers, suppliers and trade workers. Aside in the public realm contributes to local resident' feeling of ownership.

In some cases, public art has attracted funding from financial institutions.

In many advanced countries public art is seamlessly integrated in the design and planning of the cities.

In England, a significant amount of public art is commissioned via the planning system, specifically through the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (Cabe), whose key objective is designing for place. Cabe is concerned with design in virtually every area, with greater emphasis to reject design that fails to improve the character and quality of an area.

The means local authorities should be clear about goals and ideas where high-quality design is required and how public art is expected to contribute to the distinctiveness and identity of the area.

This also means that local planning policies

PUBLIC ART

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one feed kills many with little

AUTOMOTIVE year-ender

2011 IN REVIEW

The news on wheels

By Tessa R. Salazar

NEWS does go around. And when the news items are about the cars and the industry that shakes and bakes them, you can bet you'll get the info from all directions. Inquirer Motoring rolls out its nuts to give you the best news catches in 2011, in no particular order.

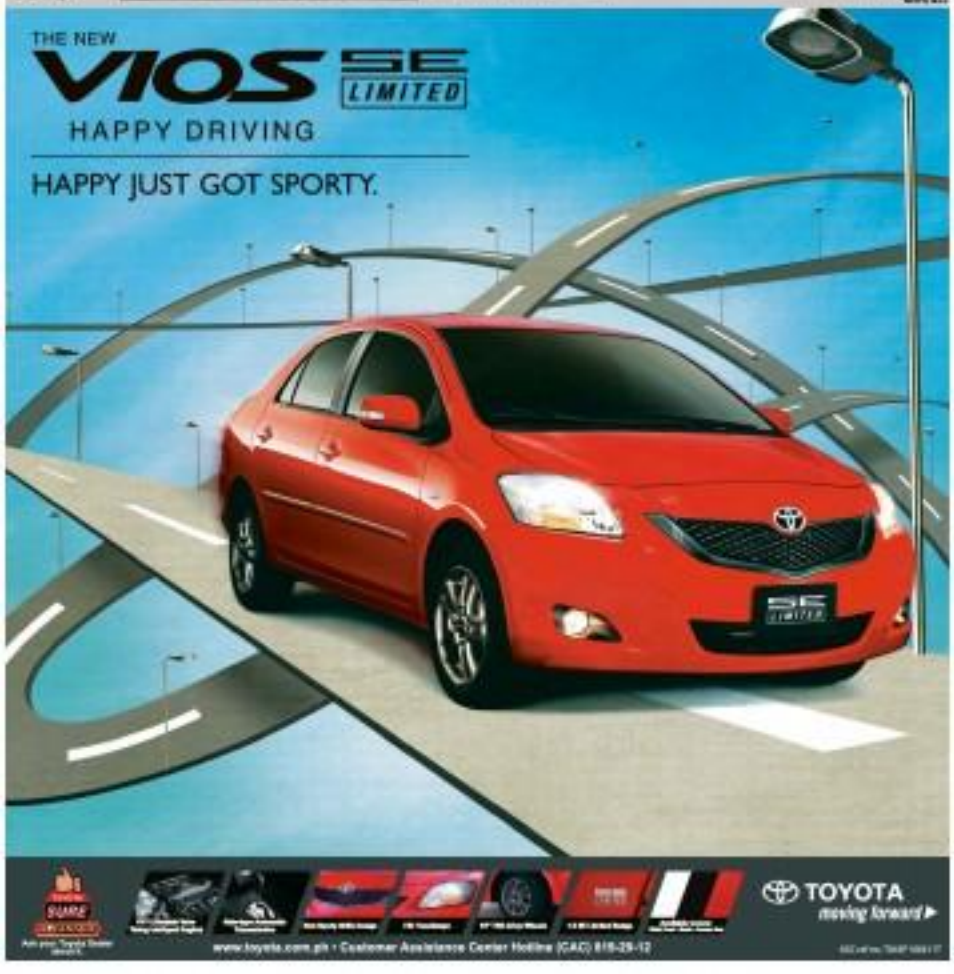
1. Japan quake rocks local auto supply. A few weeks after the devastating earthquake and resulting tsunami and nuclear crash downed an northeast Japan, the global automobile industry also felt the aftershocks. Inquirer Motoring soon published a few articles depicting the real picture of the Japanese automobile industry stalling from the effects of a triple calamity, and its implication on the local industry.

One such sector affected by the

Japan quake is now part o manufacturing. In April, despite assurances from Japanese automakers that their parts inventories were enough to last the next few months, then Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Camp) president Elizabeth H. Lee stated alternative parts sourcing as a temporary solution.

2. Death of superbike champ Shiko Bunsu. The motorcycle division of Boracay is an accident at Clark Speedway Racing Circuit in Angeles Pampanga in May led to a number of Inquirer Motoring stories, and raised questions on the safety of the racing circuits and the legitimacy of certain race organizers.

3. The floods in Thailand. The Inquirer business section pushed up the story that the massive flooding in Thailand (a few months ago) could cause disruptions in local vehicle supplies. The full impact of the Thai floods may yet to arrive in the Philippines. According to Camp, local auto companies still had inventories. Going into the



UNFLINCHING

This calamitous year not enough to dethrone Toyota

By Tonyo R. Salazar

Mahbubulnu Ingusan could only smile with satisfaction after his speech was met with hearty applause during Toyota Motor Philippines' December 21 meeting with the press at the GAS' Wine Shop Cafe at Bonifacio High Street. It rained hard that day. Several statuesque women models keeping a white Alphard company were stranded in the rain.

But a little rain couldn't have summed too for the TMP president, whose home country had been battered by a devastating earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear scare (radiation no. that order) just this March.

In fact, the company itself was even in a pretty mood this day. Marred by the tragedy that befell hundreds of thousands in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City during typhoon Sendong, Ingusan announced TMP and Metrobank would be donating P1 million for the victims.

Ingusan's concern for the latest natural calamity to hit a calamity-prone country is understandable. It isn't just that Japan and the Philippines do share some stories during the course of any given year. It isn't just that Japan and the Philippines share a ring—a Ring of Fire that threatens to shake each nation to its very foundations without warning or mercy. It isn't just because of the 14 principles of the Toyota Way, a practice that says the company is more than just the tools and the technologies but about the people who bring the system to life: bonding, communicating, resolving issues, and growing together.

It isn't even because the Toyota dealership in Cagayan de Oro was affected. It wasn't even damaged.

Ingusan was genuinely concerned for the thinning relatives of some of the CDO dealership's team members.

The CDO dealership, Ingusan explained, holds a special place in his heart. When it was inaugurated in 1997 Ingusan was there as comptroller in his previous assignment.

"They kept the photos when I was very young," he smiled. There existed three or four times this year. I really love that city. It was very sad for me to learn they were affected. That's also a motivation for us to do something. I really hope they would really recover as soon as possible."

Ingusan's thoughts then went back to his homeland, as he admitted that the March triple disaster hit his country hard in so many levels.

But Japan, like Toyota, knows how to take punishment and turn adversity into opportunity. You can count on the country, and its premiere automotive superstar, to bounce back stronger after every disaster. The country isn't a member of the elite G7 for nothing. Toyota earned its Triple Crown status, and has successfully seen it for a decade now.

Ingusan, however, remained modest by saying that in terms of TMP's "quantitative targets it was a very tough year." The year ended not more than the usual share of natural disasters—three in the Visayas, plus the tribulations of the Ring of Fire—but also the weakening of purchasing power.

"Overall, the automotive market shrunk slightly this year, the total new car market estimated at 345,000 units compared to 370,000 in 2010.

In 2010, TMP sold almost 57,000 units.

Despite the literally harsh environment for cars this year, Ingusan reiterated the company's commitment to push for the use of environment-friendly vehicles in the Philippines. That commitment is evident with the hybrid sedan Prius being continuously made available in the Philippines since 2009, making Toyota the only automotive company in the country to the hands from Lexus, its premium-end series which offers its own line of luxury hybrid sedans and SUVs) to offer hybrids despite the lack of tax breaks. There's a pending bill in the Congress for environment-friendly vehicles).

TOYOTA Motor Philippines executives at the local launch of the 2011 Hi-Lux.

THE Lexus Fuji Sport, a new sedan whose segment was launched in October.

THE 2011 Fortuner, revitalized with 17 performance, styling, accessory and technology upgrades.

Going forward, TMP will be introducing the smaller Prius C. And with that, a pending bill in Congress would finally give hybrids a fair break.

Ingusan says he is optimistic with the bill. "Many people are trying to support it. We really hope that Congress will give some privileges to fuel-efficient vehicles, hybrids, electric and CNG (compressed natural gas) vehicles. If Congress comes up with a law bill, we are thinking of introducing CNG and electric vehicles," he quipped.

Ingusan stresses his stand that it can all about profit when it comes to advocacy for the environment. "We try to come up to our manufacturing plant the most environment friendly as much as possible. We keep on introducing more economical and environmental friendly vehicles as well. We will try to disseminate our commitment to the environment in terms of product introduction and operations as well. We'll keep our commitment."

Here are more "trending" highlights of TMP in 2011, in no particular order:

1. Toyota's 14 factories received "zero-carbon" In July, members of the media were given a tour inside the Toyota Motor plant and its 14 factories (five Prius, Toyota Vios, three assembly plants together a world-class automobile assembly plant and a completely sustainable ecological system, revealing TMP is dead serious when it comes to literally cleaning up the industry's act.

2. Late this year at the Tokyo Motor Show, it was revealed that Toyota executives had purchased iQ-super compact car into an electric vehicle. Despite its size, the iQ can only three passengers and travel 105 kilometers on a single charge. Toyota says it is the ideal car for short-distance urban daily commuting. "If the driving speed is kept to around 30 kph, the car will meet 85 percent of the driver's expectations," said a Toyota representative. Toyota will market the iQ in 2012.

3. New sports car In November, Toyota came out with its debut "Shiny Red" performance Supra, Japan reported a story that Toyota Motor Corp unveiled a highly anticipated sports car that is hoped would trigger the rebirth of the company as a maker of "fun" cars. Japan's top automaker took the wraps off the compact, rear-wheel-drive coupe at the Fuji Speedway circuit at the foot of Mount Fuji, in front of thousands of racing fans—a departure from traditional banquet-style launches.

4. In the same month, TMP announced it would be shipping 26 Filipino orthodontists to South Sudan. Affirming the Filipino's innate skills in automotive maintenance and technologies, and Toyota's global efforts in developing local manpower know-how, the 26 Filipinos are set to teach for one of the world's largest Toyota distributors.

5. In July Toyota's other adopted home in Muntinlupa, Cagayan Province, was presented to the motoring media. This $3-million undertaking involving the reforestation of 2,500 hectares on the outskirts of Tagaytay was at the foot of the historic Manila-Cavite-Tagaytay-Nasugbu passes part of the backbones of the Cagayan River.

6. In September, Toyota's All-in Cash Out All-out promo was launched. Introducing TMP's most enticing promotional campaign, Toyota debuted Super a chance to save more with its increased discount levels.

7. In November, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Camp) report showed Toyota remained the top automotive seller after 11 months, with a 26 percent share of the market.

8. In November, Toyota unveiled the 2011 Fortuner, revitalized with 17 performance, styling, accessory and technology upgrades as well as the Hi-Lux.

9. The Lexus Fuji Sport, a true wheel drive sportcar, was launched October in Philippine soil. Dubbed the "fabulously 100-mile" engineer from the Lexus Group in Toyota Motor Corp., who began developing the supercar in 2000, was given 6 hours. In Asia, only the Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan were allocated the LFA, according to Lexus Manila Inc. This is the newly engineered, bigger car models such as the Lexus, Indonesia and Thailand with new LFA units. The LFA unit at the Lexus Manila showroom at the Bonifacio Global City, one of only 500 ever to be built, is not for sale.

10. In February, Inquirer Motoring came out with an exclusive sneak peek of the 2011 Lexus CT200h, the first and only full hybrid in the premium compact segment, and as such carries the core technology of Toyota Lexus, its hybrid drive.

11. Another Inquirer exclusive, the 2011 Lexus RX450h was test driven and reviewed. The Lexus RX450h is the only full hybrid luxury SUV commercially available in the country.

THE Lexus CT200h, the first and only full hybrid in the premium compact segment.

The news on wheels

From page B3-1

Christmas buying season, however, the work stoppage in some That vehicle and parts plants could cause a shortage in local vehicle supply.

On the other hand, the Thai floods were seen as an opportunity for local parts makers, as car manufacturers had been seen making the rounds of the 13th SIYPMAP (Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines) members here or early to mid-September.

4. An electric sports car, made in the Philippines This October, it was announced that an all-electric grand touring car made entirely in the Philippines by Filipinos is now ready enough to be unveiled as the partial glass Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) show at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Nevada from Nov. 1 to 4.

5. The comeback no. Ondoy still in our minds. On the second anniversary of Ondoy in September, we counted the toxic Car lines once went up (according to the Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association, total premiums expected in for motor vehicle insurance rose to P13.5 billion in 2010). And as for an auto sales went in 2010, more and more buyers opted for the higher clearance SUVs, MUVs, vans and pick-ups.

Interesting little typhoons only served to reinforce the public's notion that a rugged country with unpredictable (rains in weather does, indeed, need rugged vehicles. The devastation wrought most recently by typhoon Sendong in Cagayan de Oro, Iligan, and other parts of southern Philippines is just the latest case.

6. Toxic taxis. In November, the spotlight fell on taxis running on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), as a number of passengers and taxi drivers complained of respiratory diseases and other health problems after reportedly riding or driving taxis fueled by LPG. A series of stories that came out exclusively in the Inquirer revealed the true causes of the air toxicity inside taxicabs: chief among them the faulty installation of LPG fuel systems, as well as poorly maintained ventilation mechanisms.

7. Delivering the 'wang wang'. P-Noy's Sona of the Nation address (from) revolved around the theme of the Wang-wang (sirens) to emphasize the days of government bullying over its people have ended. It's the sign of the times, for in green, yellow and red, where green means go and red really means stop.

8. Longevity landmarks. 2011 saw the year team brands celebrated a good, healthy number. On the domestic side, the Chevrolet marked 100 years. On the German side, Mercedes-Benz still believes 125.

9. Fuel prices hit new 2011 Diesel Premium branded gasoline exceeded the P60/liter mark, and diesel breached the still-P40/liter mark, prompting many transport groups to cry "Take it like!". Be like how mounting increase in transport fares. Other businesses affected such as cars, fleet and supply followed suit.

10. One resigns, two move up. But major reasons, one of the most prominent women in the industry made a startling announcement. In June, Ellen Tordesillas announced her resignation as president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc., and chief operating officer of Universal Motors Corp., resigned from both posts, prompting panelists in speculate on the next steps in the life of Jose Araneta Lee's resignation comes news of two women executives moving to the top. In February, Mariwar Grimaldi Pabico, then-MCC marketing director, was named president of Asian Carmakers Corp. (car lines: Mitsubishi, Cygnet, Proton, was presented to the motoring media. This $3-million undertaking involving the reforestation of 2,500 hectares on the outskirts of Tagaytay at the foot of the historic Manila-Cavite-Tagaytay-Nasugbu passes part of the backbones of the Cagayan River.

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9. The Lexus Fuji Sport, a true wheel drive sportcar, was launched October in Philippine soil. Dubbed the "fabulously 100-mile" engineer from the Lexus Group in Toyota Motor Corp., who began developing the supercar in 2000, was given 6 hours. In Asia, only the Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan were allocated the LFA, according to Lexus Manila Inc. This is the newly engineered, bigger car models such as the Lexus, Indonesia and Thailand with new LFA units. The LFA unit at the Lexus Manila showroom at the Bonifacio Global City, one of only 500 ever to be built, is not for sale.

10. In February, Inquirer Motoring came out with an exclusive sneak peek of the 2011 Lexus CT200h, the first and only full hybrid in the premium compact segment, and as such carries the core technology of Toyota Lexus, its hybrid drive.

11. Another Inquirer exclusive, the 2011 Lexus RX450h was test driven and reviewed. The Lexus RX450h is the only full hybrid luxury SUV commercially available in the country.

A Pinoy-made electric car made it to the Semo in Las Vegas.

ISUZU's D-Max has been a fixture in tough and terrible terrain

Built to last

Text and photos by Charlie E. Bolivar

EVERY ONCE in a while, there comes a vehicle that is so solidly built, possesses sturdy engine, and comfortable interior that buyers won't mind if there are already newer, powerful and more sleek-looking counterparts in the market.

Such is the case for Isuzu Philippines Corp.'s (Isuzu) resilient models—the Alterra sport utility vehicle, the D-Max pickup and the Crosswind Asian utility vehicle.

"Sometimes, we find our three models to have exceptional—and sometimes surprising—endurance and value that they even surfaced their peers. We earned a good reputation and through the years we were able to add to some well-earned feats," said IPC President Ryoji Domenoki.

Indeed, Isuzu's tough reputation has been proven to many times in so many instances wherein IPC brought motoring media in some harsh on- and off-road conditions.

Selling well

No wonder IPC's three models are still selling well. An impressive 83,074 units of the Crosswind (including its premium variant, the Sportivo) were already sold since it was introduced in June 2001; 34,046 units of the D-Max sold since its October 2003 launch; and a total of 9,750 units of the Alterra Urban Cruiser units sold after its 2005 introduction.

"It is said that the easiest way to determine long-term reliability is to wait a long time considering that it is hard to predict the reliability of a newly-launched model. Somehow, this helped our three models gain loyal customers through the years. And we reward their loyalty by making sure after-sales service is quick and effective. We also show our customers how IPC has become a responsible corporate partner, supporting many important causes such as family-oriented activities as well as those that advocate the preservation of the environment," said IPC SVP Art Imbesat.

In a series of one-day activity that began in Isuzu Gilmanian dealership last March 20 and ended in Isuzu General Santos dealership last Nov. 26, IPC invited the families of their buyers to the Isuzu Family Challenge, an event that combined fuel economy run and family day.

Fuel economy run

Held every Saturday at each of Isuzu's 18 dealerships nationwide, the Isuzu Family Challenge required all family members to take part in a fuel-economy run in the morning and a family-oriented thanksgiving party in the afternoon where participants join in dance contests as well as games (videoke contest, kiddie playground and video games), established food stations (ice cream, popcorn and cotton candy) and entertainers (face painting, photo booth, chorus and balloon twisters).

Already a tradition every anniversary, IPC this year joined hands with the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines to help conserve a watershed in Isabela and at the same time train farmers in agro-forestry.

"We have been very active in environmental campaigns for so many years now, and we intend to sustain that commitment to Mother Nature every anniversary. On our 24th year, we decided to hold a tree-planting event that will help establish 40 hectares of agro-forestry land in the town of Dupax, with a view to empowering local farmers by equipping them with the proper skills in planting seedlings," said Domenoki.

As part of its corporate social responsibility, IPC is also supporting the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority in Mexico's Training Center in Tacloban, Leyte that has already accepted 120 scholars, 54 of whom have already graduated and have been deployed for work in various Isuzu dealerships nationwide including at the IPC headquarters in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The center, funded by Isuzu Motors Limited of Japan and supported by Isuzu and Mes Electrotechnical-Philippines, is not only taking care of the education and training of those students, but is also pulling the best efforts so that they will be gainfully employed after they graduate.

Get to places with entertainment and direction with the 2012 Isuzu Crosswind as it now includes new touch-screen audio monitor with navigation. Say goodbye to boring rides and confusing drives!

Bring almost anything in these long and off-town trips as the 2012 Isuzu Crosswind is now equipped with a roof basket. Big or small, that useful roof basket can really handle any stuff.

"Single-in-Dash with 7" LCD-Touch Panel with navigation-ready

Large 3rd row cabin for passenger and cargo

Roof Basket

"Sportivo-r" Stroker

ISUZU
Your responsible partner

Charting its own path

Kia has finally emerged as an equally formidable world-class Korean emblem

By Charlie L. Rebus

AFTER YEARS of lingering in the shadow of Hyundai, Kia may be expected as the year when many heard Kia has finally emerged as an equally formidable world-class Korean emblem.

Despite the fact that both brands are owned by the Hyundai-Kia Automotive Group, as well as share platforms and powertrains, the design direction Kia currently took enabled it to establish itself as the public mind.

Stemming away from the sleekly and more cutesy design philosophy of its sister brand, Kia decided to embrace chunkier lines and more aggressive styling.

Enlisted to Germany-based chief designer Peter Schreyer who injected life to every brand new Kia—a unique design DNA that begins with an eye-catching figure nose grille.

Welcome change

It was a welcome change that Colombian Autocar Corp., curiously appreciated as the distributor of the Kia brand in the Philippines suddenly enjoyed renewed energy able to sell 5,483 units as of November.

"People not only perceive Kia as a wise and practical choice but also a lifestyle statement," said CAC president Gilda Domingo who reported that Kia's stylish Picanto is enjoying an 89 percent sales increase while the bold and edgy Soul is looking on a 59 percent sales growth. Sharp-looking Sportage improved its sales by 86 percent.

Domingo also attributed Kia's rising fame to the various sponsorships CAC entered into this year including the historic Le Tour De Filipinas 2011, a race that was included in the Asia Tour calendar of world governing body, the Union Cycliste Internationale.

Ashak supporter

Last May, CAC also signed on with the Philippine Ashak as the football team's official transport provider.

In its tie-up to further strengthen its investment, CAC also linked off its first-ever Kia Cup football tournament, attracting more than 30 teams in the men's and ladies' open divisions. Even key members of the Ashak as well as the Homeless World Cup soccer team that CAC supports joined the tourney.

"To further establish the Kia brand, we are also tapping the power of the social media (http://www.facebook.com/kiaphilippines). When we launched the all-new Picanto last May we created a microsite to highlight the 'My Best Ex' campaign as well to help interested buyers find more information about the new model," said Domingo.

Domingo added that this same fervor and passion continues with the recent introduction of the all-new Sportage, an award winning compact SUV (the much-vetted 2011 Red Dot Design Award and the iF Product Design Award 2011).

SHARP-LOOKING Sportage improved its sales by 86 percent this year

THE all-new Picanto sports a sleeker look as well as much improved and efficient engine

CAC chairman Pepito Abrams (second from right) and CAC president Gilda Domingo formalize Kia's partnership with Don Pedro, manager of the Philippine Ashak

DOMINO Card celebrating scores by Jerry Arellano (left) with Pakistani members of the Ashak

The KIA Soul's dynamic styling and ruggedly boxy exterior, which boasts the new Kia tiger-nose grille, will definitely turn heads. Its hip interiors are fitted with plush trimmings, high-quality seats and the latest in connectivity. Expect it to fuel-efficient, 1.6 Gamma engine's 16 valves to deliver a fun drive enhanced with the sporty handling of an SUV. With a 5 year/100,000 kms warranty you can put your soul at ease.

ALBAY ... ZAMBOANGA

AUTOMOTIVE year-ender

MACO's second from left awards to runner BMW Cup International golf's tournament champion Steve Stricker and symbolic token to Singapore's Asian Carmakers Corp. executive director for sales and marketing Glen Dong (right) and Singapore distributor general manager Andrew Robertson are on.

MACO boss Joe Palanca, Pacza and Andrew Jesse with stunt racing car driving Andy Priaulx at Marikina City.

BMW: Retaining market leadership in the luxury segment

By Jason R. Ang

BMW, as the market leader in the luxury segment, certainly did not set out to do so in 2011. Asian Carmakers Corp., BMW's exclusive distributor in the Philippines, launched four new models this year. These were the all-new X3, the 5 Series M, the 6 Series Convertible, and the all-new 1 Series.

The all-new 1 Series and X3 proved popular, increasing their unit sales by 236 and 144 percent respectively. The 5 Series, launched late 2010, kept its momentum, registering a 68 percent growth. This helped boost the company's total unit sales by 14 percent, to 716 units. ACC's modest share likewise grew to 32 percent, from the previous 28 percent.

What is encouraging is that BMW's new product, the 3 Series sedans and coupes, managed to eke out a 2.6 percent growth, despite its entering the end of its life cycle. BMW will be launching the all-new 3 Series sedan in a matter of a month, in 2012. The new 3 is expected to raise the benchmark once again for the compact executive class sedan.

The all-new X3 is available for leasing as low as 0 per cent, which automatically shuts down the engine in traffic jams and stops lights. The system will instantly start up the engine again when needed. X3 xDrive 20d is powered by a 2.0-liter four-cylinder diesel engine with common-rail direct injection and turbocharger. With 184 hp and 380 Nm of torque, it can go from 0 to 100 km/h in a respectable 8.5 seconds.

The 1 Series M is a performance version of the 1 Series. It is powered by a 3.0-liter six-cylinder engine, which is mated to a seven-speed dual-clutch transmission. With 340 hp and 450 Nm of torque, it can go from 0 to 100 km/h in 4.8 seconds.

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BMW B2-4

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FOTON's new brand identity

FOTON Motor Philippines' (FMP) executive vice president Jorge Juban reveals Foton's new brand identity and shine at the Foton's Big Show.

FOTON Motor Philippines (FMP) president and CEO Rommel Sytin

A stronger global vision

FMP unveils new brand identity at FOTON's Big Show

FOTON Motor Philippines (FMP) shares a new passion in words reaching higher and greeting further. One of the country's leading commercial vehicle brands, FOTON gathers thousands of guests and distinguished government officials as they launch their new brand identity. The innovative unveiling took place at the FOTON's Big Show held last October at the PICC Forum, Pasay City.

The new logo is characterized by a round rim circling three bends that form a cut ting diamond. "Diamond is hardest material, the cleanest is the core of Foton's brand design. Foton's 'Blazing Diamond' new logo radiates eternal brand essence, symbolizing its pursuit for diamond quality perfection through technological innovations as the basic driving force for creating breakthroughs and new energy product," said Jorge Juban, executive vice president of FOTON Motor Philippines.

He then explains about the bright hubs that circles the diamond stating "Foton Motor brand's relentless pursuit for excellence and perfection. It also represents perfect circular elements embracing the competitiveness customer sizes of Foton Motor to its clients. It also stands for Foton's aim to create the perfect value experience, emulating the harmonious rapid beats among man, vehicle, and road in the Asian climes.

Designed by world-renowned design team headed by Erik Spiekermann and Meng Mo, the new brand identity envelops FOTON's vision for the company of becoming acknowledged as one of the Top 50 vehicle manufacturers in the world by the year 2020. One great example of this big hope is FOTON's Big Show - an exhibition and trade to event that features to complete line-up and welcome its new line of heavy equipment and construction machineries. With the even more extensive product array FOTON truly gears up for greater things as a solid, global 5- company to be. Internal L. Sytin, president and CEO of FMP also known as United Asia Automotive Group Inc. or UAAGI commits an unwavering dedication towards the goal. "Despite the great work and challenges ahead of us," shares Sytin, "let me assure you that we love what we do at FOTON - that is, to sincerely serve you better all the time."

It is considered FMP's grand on exhibition and trade to event to date. Thousands of guests and invited members of the media and government officials flocked to PICC Forum 2, Pasay City as FOTON Motor Philippines (FMP) launched its extensive line- up of commercial vehicles and machineries. With FOTON's new wheel loaders, excavators, backhoe loaders, rollers, and forklifts now ready to roll out industries in the spectrum. Now FOTON has the sole brand distinction in the Philippines of having the full product profile. From passenger vehicles to light or heavy duty trucks, to special duty trucks and tractor heads, all the way to excavators, wheel loaders, even bulldozers, and forklifts - under a single brand name." added Sytin.

With its successful launching of FOTON's Big Show, the big new line up is now ready to for the market. FOTON even makes all these more reachable through the event's Pulutan Deals - a one- in- an- entire- universe giveaway exclusive deals of vehicles for a brand new unit. With in minutes, participants get to enter home with their pick of any vehicle among the new line up.

FOTON's GTX 4x2 Tractor Head

FROM left, United Asia Automotive Group Inc. (UAAGI) chair Dennis Sytin, Foton Motor Group VP Li King Ming, Senator Ralph Recto, Vice President Jaime Binay, UAAGI/FMP president Rommel Sytin, Clark Development Corp. president Felipe Remollo, and UAAGI executive VP Jorge Juban.

BMW: Retaining market leadership in the luxury segment

From page B3-1

version is following, with 0-100 km/h in just 4.9 seconds. Another sports car launched by ACC was the new 6-Series Convertible, a Grand Tourisme geared for comfort and effortless style. At the launch, Olaf P. Dietz, ACC sales and marketing director, termed it a new addition to the company and, "The new BMW 6-Series will add on the excellent sports car that embodies the hallmark propositions of a BMW convertible."

It was a very active year of model launches here and abroad for ACC. ACC sponsored a series of BMW expo called the Joyful to Tourisme, celebrating the brand's market leadership. Also at Pulse, president of ACC, Roland Emerich cast a tribute to Mary Kom and titled Go to Asia in the Performing Experience as a way to affirm their companies' commitment to motorsports. ACC also capped the year with the revival of the BMW Cup (invitational) golf tournament at the Orchid Wind Pinch golf course and the special screening of Mission: Impossible: Ghost Protocol, the Tom Cruise movie featuring the BMW 6-Series Gc.

In its 10th year, **Hyundai sustains amazing growth**

By Aida Sevilla Mendoza

2011 marks the 10th year of Hyundai's amazing growth in the Philippine automotive industry. Starting with only five dealers in 2001, when it was appointed exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the PH, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI) now has 39 strategically located dealerships across the nation and has sustained its ranking, achieved in 2010, as No. 3 in overall industry sales.

That a foreign brand could rise to the Top Three in an industry dominated by Japanese marques set a precedent and affirmed HARI's management capabilities and marketing skill. Reviewing the year that is about to end, HARI president and CEO Mr. Hi Beom Agado said that the company was able to pursue its business strategy of sustained growth and customer satisfaction in four ways: by offering a portfolio of multi-awarded and globally competitive products, maintaining a resilient and innovative work force, establishing an expansive and fast-growing dealership network and striving for customer-focused service excellence.

HARI was the first auto distributor in the PH to offer the five-year New Vehicle Limited Warranty or 100,000-kilometer program, whichever comes first. Also the first to provide a car loyalty program called the One Hyundai Club that rewards new and existing Hyundai vehicle owners in a range of privileges and rewards. This year, HARI was included in Business World's Top 100 Philippine Corporations due to its revenue growth, was named to Mahindi's Top Corporate Citizens for its local contributions while Agado was the Finest and Young Women Entrepreneur of the Year Awards.

PRESTIGIOUS. In June 2011, as the Hyundai Motor Company (HMC) Global Distributors Conference in Busan, Canada participated in by 103 countries, Agado received on behalf of HARI the prestigious Global Distributor of the Year title for outstanding sales and overall distributorship management in 2010, when HARI sales breached 20,000 units and soared by 62 percent from its 2009 sales. This award was preceded by the Asia-Pacific Distributor of the Year Award from HMC three times: in 2005, 2006 and 2008.

Surpassing the 20,000-unit mark is a tough act to follow given the supply availability problem HARI faced this year because of global demand outstripping production. Globally, Hyundai sold 5.68 million units in the first 11 months, up by 11.4 percent from the same period in 2010.

Nonetheless, HMB sold a total of 18,922 units from January to November 2011, growing 1.2 percent from 18,696 units sold in the same period last year. Agado expects HMB to close the year with flat to 2.5-percent growth, maintaining Hyundai's No. 3 rank in overall industry sales with a market share of 12.4 percent.

In January this year, HARI began retailing the all-new locally assembled subcompact passenger car (PC), Hyundai Eon. By November, the Accent had achieved No. 3 in volume sales, ensuring 15 percent market share of the subcompact PC segment. The all-new Elantra, launched last May, had captured 18 percent of the compact PC segment by November.

FIRST TO OFFER. HARI gained major market share by being the first to offer to consumers a wide range of automobile options to both gasoline and common rail direct injection (CRDI) VGT (Variable Geometry Turbo) diesel variants. Aside from the fluidic-sculptured Accent and Elantra, HARI also sells retail at present the i10 and Getz minicars, the i20, the midsize Sonata and Santa Fe sport utility vehicle (SUV), Santa Fe midsize SUV, Genesis luxury sedan and sports coupe, H-100 coaster and the Grand Starex, the first Hyundai model to capture the fancy of minivan-riding Filipino families.

Hyundai's CRDI diesel engine technology, introduced in the first generation Elantra in 2001, was soon made available in the Accent, Matrix, Tucson, Santa Fe and Veracruz.

HARI's 39 dealerships play a big role in Hyundai's success story in the PH. In 2011, HARI inaugurated four new dealerships (Gerweshila, North Edsa, San Pablo, Laguna and Tarlac City) and re-launched five others with Hyundai's new global corporate (showrooms and workshops). HARI also refreshed Hyundai's presence in Commonwealth Avenue, Las Piñas, Bicutan, Laguna, Bulo and Davao via Hyundai's DBPI or Dealer Enhancement Program 2.

CSR. Giving back is the communities where it operates, HARI could itself with three big Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects this year. In terms of the Environment and Health, HARI organized the Hyundai Eco for a Cause that attracted almost 20,000 runners to support Responsibility, Unity and Action Building (RUN). HARI also launched the Gawad Kalinga Generation Center and built the Cameroun Maternity Hospital for St. Scholastica's Priory (Agado is an alumna of St. Scholastica's College in Manila).

In the field of Heritage and Culture, HARI supported the restoration of Rizal Park that included the revival of the Flower Clock and the installation of Ang Bagong Pinoy sculpture.

Approaching the year-end holiday season, HARI organized a Christmas hand-raising campaign for Tahanan Child-an, Bethlehem, Habitat for Humanity, RED Foundation, Bilib Children's Village, Philippine University of the Philippines, GMA Kapuso Foundation and Philippine Daily Inquirer Foundation.

TWO LAUNCHES The Elantra launched in grand style in Manila (above) and for Asian journalists in Seoul, Korea (below).

HARI makes children happy and promotes a healthy lifestyle with a running event.

AGADO ranks the PDI-Inquirer Photo Finish during the HARI CSR Christmas Event.

Summing up the year 2011 in nutshell, Agado said that HMB sustained its sales volume against global and domestic uncertainties, achieved significant milestone in its advocacies and CSR initiatives, and increased and improved customer relations via its One Hyundai Club program... thereby positioning Hyundai to reach greater heights in 2012.

PGA's new raging bull charges in January as Audi and Porsche earn top marques

By Alvin Uy

It's been a busy year for PGA, the country's distributor for Audi and Porsche cars and it will be no different next year as PGA recently got the distributorship to Lamborghini as well. Audi's sales went up by 9 percent this year as PGA introduced the flagship A8L model as well as the A6 and very sexy A7 sedans and the high performance RS5 model. Aside from this, PGA also introduced the Audi A3 (3) and Q3 compact SUV coupe crossover models. The sedan limited Audi A8 GT is the latest Audi to date. But in terms of land speed and it is fast off the proverbial shelf as well. Only three still-in-crates arrived last month and all of which are committed already to three lucky owners. Only 333 units of these R8 GTs were produced and allocations were even scarcer. Categorically speaking, 33 made it to UK and 90 units made it to the US customers.

While Porsche's unit sales were down by 10 percent because of limited allocations given to the RP market of the newly launched 2nd generation Cayenne, PGA is expecting better figures next year as the highly anticipated 911 model will be launched by the first quarter of next year. Dubbed as model 991, it had its world premiere last month and had a very warm reception due to its purity to the 911 lineage and better overall performance. Fueled by a global high demand for this model, the new Cayenne suffered delays in production and being the best-selling model for PGA, it naturally suffered some setbacks in sales volumes. Aside from the Cayenne, a diesel variant was also introduced this year together with the Cayenne S and Panamera Turbo S models.

Audi's market share is about 15 percent while Porsche has 8 percent in the luxury car market and is expected to maintain its share largely due to a loyal customer and brand following. PGA is a major sponsor of Clark Speedway as naturally it held several track days for the media and special customers, among which were the Panamera Track Day last March and the PGA run-track day and Audi Quattro Cup held last October. JDPower awarded Porsche the 'Automobile Performance, Execution and Layout Study (APEAL)' given by J.D. Power and Associates, a globally renowned American market research company, and it also considers Porsche as the most attractive car brand in the USA. Popular Magazine gave its 2011 Car of the Year Award to the Audi A7 4.2 while the Audi R8 GT got the Sports Car of the Year. The Porsche 911 also was given the first inside color and has also considered the sportiest cars of 2011 according to a recent reader survey in the US. Aside from brand and design recognitions, both brands also proved their dominance in the race track by winning the 2011 24 Hours of LeMans (Audi) and 24 Hours Endurance race in Nurburgring (Porsche) while the Audi R8 is the DTM Champion for the year.

PGA is also excited in establishing the Porsche Training and Recruitment Center Asia (PTRCA), together with the Don Bosco Technical Institute. This year, its fifth and sixth batch of graduates totals to over 90 scholars who have earned their skills and training at Porsche factories with jobs waiting for them in other Porsche outlets throughout the world. The team owners hatch will be assigned to Alex Eibeld with guaranteed hours and helping as well as travel expenses. PTRCA was established in 2008, through the partnership of Porsche, PGA Cars and Don Bosco Technical Institute and is considered as the first training facility outside Germany.

Recently, Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A. appointed PGA as the Philippine sole importer and distributor for the Italian supercar brand. Its first showroom, Lamborghini Manila, will be the first Lamborghini facility in the country and is slated to open in Bonifacio Global City by January. The new Lamborghini showroom will be built in accordance with Lamborghini's international showroom standards. Although there were no official figures announced as of press time, PGA confirmed that the first of its three shipments of Lamborghini Gallardos are already sold out.

ROBERTO Cuneta Jr. (left) poses w/ the Lamborghini Gallardo

WITH only 333 units worldwide, only 3 made it to the country – the Audi R8 GT

THE NEW Porsche 911 interiorly color-named 991 is one of new models due to arrive in 2012.

Q: How do you make green technology better?
A: By turning it Blue!

blue drive

Because everything, everyone and all we do are interconnected, Hyundai's concern for the environment has gone beyond social responsibility. It has become their vision. Caring for nature through lessening carbon emissions, consuming less fossil fuel, and exploring alternative energies are integral to Hyundai's philosophy of creating a cleaner world. But what if green technology isn't enough? How can we make it better? Hyundai's solution: make it Blue.

Q: What is Blue Drive?

A: Blue Drive is an environmental initiative that supports the development of Hyundai eco-friendly technologies, not limited to hybrid vehicles and polymer batteries, but also improved aerodynamics, low resistance tires, and engine & transmission enhancements for better performance and higher fuel economy to reduce dependence on fossil fuel. The name combines the words "Blue", emblematic of Hyundai's eco-friendly technology developments, and "Drive", representing the auto company's outstanding efforts in advanced mobility, while the green leaf in the logo symbolizes life and synergy between people and our planet Earth.

Q: How will Hyundai achieve Blue Drive?

A: Blue Drive is pursued through a two-pronged "Blue Drive Initiative. First, Blue Drive focuses on improving fuel efficiency. And second, Blue Drive aims to develop alternative fuel vehicles with vastly improved environmental characteristics. As stated by Mr. Seung-Koo Chung, Chairman and CEO of Hyundai Motor Company, "We are now making an unprecedented effort in the development of alternative fuel vehicles as a fundamental solution for climate change and energy security." In realizing Hyundai's serious commitment to dramatically reduce carbon emissions and fuel consumption through fossil-fuel independent motoring.

Q: What are Hyundai's latest Blue Drive engine technologies on fuel efficiency?

A: Cutting-edge fuel-efficient engine technology such as Hyundai's next generation R-eVGT diesel engine technology and the latest Gasoline Direct Injection (GDI) engine innovations, which have demonstrated Hyundai's zeal to lead in fuel economy innovations to maximize the energy efficiency of its powertrains that generate force and transfer that same force to the wheels, minimizing energy loss, and utilizing renewable energy in order to lower carbon dioxide emissions from its vehicles.

Blue Drive innovations also consist of higher fuel efficient capabilities of improved aerodynamics, recalibrated engine specifications, and energy-saving alternator management system which are now present in the all-new Hyundai Accent and the Hyundai Sonata.

Likewise, down-sized engines and efficient transmissions have greatly increased engine efficiency as demonstrated in the Sonata's 2-liquid I-VARIS automatic transmission, and Theta II 2-cylinder GDI powertrains, one of the most powerful petrol engines in its class, which can capably deliver high outputs of energy while complying with eco-environmental standards. Hyundai's "Fluidic" additions", a Blue Drive innovation, has been steadily assimilated into the improved aerodynamic design language of Hyundai Tucson, Accent and Elantra, visibly highlighted by strong side character lines, wrap-around tail lamps, and a distinctive hexagonal grille.

Q: What can we expect from the Hyundai Blue Drive in alternative fuel capabilities?

A: The burgeoning petroleum crisis and the growing consciousness for eco-savvy motoring have led Hyundai to develop vehicles that run on various biofuels—feasible fuel alternatives that help reduce dependence on traditional non-renewable sources of energy, such as gasoline, coal, and oil. In the US and Brazil markets, advanced capabilities for flex-fuel vehicles have been developed, enabling Hyundai vehicles to run on various ethanol and gasoline blends. Very soon, some of vehicles will run E85 fuel (85% ethanol, 15% gasoline) blend will be made available to require carbon emissions in the region. In Europe, where diesel-run cars are popular and EU technical standards set for 5% diesel fuels with a 5% biodiesel blend, Hyundai models have vastly found market acceptance. Similar for diesel engines is our in-track with up to 20% - 30% biodiesel and ethanol being developed.

GO green. DRIVE blue.

*Hyundai's aim of the future will solve the world's blue.

In India, Hyundai's advancements in compressed natural gas (CNG) technology have gained headway with a CNG infrastructure that is well established in the country. Compared to gasoline models, Hyundai R&D has found that CNG can save fewer carbon emissions as low as 20% - 30%. And as for the market, Hyundai produced a CNG variant of India's ever popular small car, the Hyundai Santro.

Q: What will we see in the near future from Blue Drive?

A: Research and development engineers at Hyundai Motor Design Headquarters in South Korea take inspiration from the companies green campaign with the construction of concept drives, such as the HCD-1 or "i-Mode" crossover concept automobile that is powered by a 2.0-liter direct-injection Theta turbocharged engine, the sporty "Blue-WE" car with a 1.6-liter CVVT powerhouse with a 100-kilowatt electric motor, and the space-inspired "a-Mono," which revves forward with a 3-cylinder dual-CVVT engine with an electric double-layer ultracapacitor and a 12V battery. All three designs are just some of the concept vehicles now being used as benchmarks for the new quality, design, and performance of Hyundai's next-generation derivatives, future gas-electric hybrids, and fuel-cell technologies.

Still, the most ingenious innovation that truly promises to rainbow Hyundai's status is its pursuit of fuel efficiency and zero-percent emission in the production of its very own lithium-ion polymer batteries. In this technological innovation lies the cornerstone of Hyundai's eco-plan which will definitely change the way people around the world perceive motoring.

Q: What Blue Drive efforts have been made in the Philippines?

A: In the Philippines, with the government's implementation of the Biofuel Law, or RA 9367, HMPI made Hyundai's compliance official with "E10-B5" certification of each Hyundai vehicle to generate awareness on the biofuel readiness of Hyundai's line-up. With forward-thinking design philosophies, Hyundai vehicles even surpass the country's mandatory market standards of E10-B5 diesel-run blend (5-10% ethanol blend with gasoline and 1-2% CME blend with diesel) to provide biofuel-ready vehicles to Filipino motorists.

"As leaders in the automotive industry, Hyundai Motor Company and HMPI are committed to creating a global village that we move together towards a bright and progressive future," stated HMPI President and CEO, Fe Prieto-Aguilo. "Hyundai is definitely up to the challenges our world is facing right now. After all, our lives, our nations, and our future are at stake. The Blue Drive will be Hyundai's answer to the global call for survival, or sustainability."

HYUNDAI AUTHORIZED DEALERS

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Re-igniting the passion for Chevy

By Aida Sevilla Mendoza

WHEN General Motors Southeast Asia Operations appointed a new company two years ago to be the exclusive importer and distributor of Chevrolet automobiles and parts in the Philippines, people were fascinated by the choice of its corporate name: The Covenant Car Company, Inc. or TCCCI. It is rare for the corporate distributor of an automotive brand to use any descriptive word in incorporating and opening for business.

While the word "covenant" has a rather formal and exact connotation, the ultimate goal of TCCCI is anything but. From Day 1, TCCCI set out to re-ignite the Filipino passion for Chevrolet, not only by drawing on memories of the days when Chevys like the Bel Air and Impala roamed the streets of Manila — while the Corvette and Camaro were the sports cars younger set dreamed of — but also by launching exciting new Chevrolet global models like the Cruze and the Spark.

In this mission to revive the Filipino's love for the iconic American brand, TCCCI is led by lawyer Alberto Avella as president and managing director and Lyn M. Bueza as marketing services director. Avella brought to TCCCI 15 years of experience in the auto industry, most recently as president and CEO of Viking Cos Corp., the importer and distributor of Volvo cars.

EVENTFUL. 2011, the second year of TCCCI's business operations, was no especially eventful one as Chevrolet celebrated its 100th anniversary worldwide. Looking back, Avella says, "We had a year full of activities and significant achievements, the Chevrolet Cruze having been the endgame of the prestigious Philippine Car of the Year 2010-2011 Award while the Chevy Spark made an impressive entrance in the latter half of the year with its value rates and market performance."

Last April, TCCCI launched the Chevy 8-year warranty plus vehicle Acclaim claims to solid proof of their confidence in the quality and workmanship of each vehicle that they release to the public. "Our goal is to increase the trust in the Chevrolet brand and make people realize how much quality and engineering come with our products, and how satisfied and proud they will be in owning one," he asserted.

TCCCI's marketing efforts are paying off as backed by the 53.5 percent increase as of November YTD (year to date) 2011 wherein sales registered 2,416 over 1,423 units in the same period of 2010. Furthermore, TCCCI was proclaimed No. 1 for after sales service and overall customer satisfaction by the J.D Power & Associates Customer Satisfaction Survey in the Philippines.

GAINERS. In 2011, aside from the Spark, TCCCI introduced the Cruze

HARTINI Aplet, president of General Motors for Southeast Asia Operations, join TCCCI's chair Richard Lee, managing director and chief operating officer lawyer Alberto Avella and executive director Sylvia Yu at the Orlando launch.

ARCELA and TCCCI marketing director Lyn Bueza at the Centennial Launch event in Switzerland.

RITTEL and Lee

Aveo, the Trax crossover sub-compact, and the Orlando, a seven-seater multipurpose vehicle. In the Spark has gained 15.1 percent segment share in the mini PC (passenger car) market. In the low-thirsty PC segment, the Cruze achieved 15.3 percent share in second overall to the segment until October, in general, the Cruze is in third overall position in that segment.

With the arrival of these four new offerings in 2011, TCCCI has broadened its range of choices for customers from the smallest — the Spark — to the biggest — the Suburban. In between are the Aveo sub-compact, the Captiva 4-door compact SUV, the Cruze gasoline and diesel passenger sedan, the Trailblazer large luxury SUV, the Orlando MPV and the Camaro sports car. Due to be launched in February 2012 is the Colorado diesel pickup truck.

This year, to cull the wider variety of models, TCCCI opened five new

CHEVY owners participate in a snow rally during the Photo area.

Suzuki: Small is beautiful, indeed

By Charles E. Bolaos

In 2005, Suzuki Philippines launched the Swift, a front-drive hatchback that is a pleasure to drive and easily sports some much more expensive-looking paint-related scenes to her fair-ter.

Suddenly, competitors took notice of the company whose bread-and-butter products are motorcycles and scooters.

Of course, Suzuki Philippines already made waves in the past when it launched the 2.3-liter 16-Grand Vitara in 2000 and packed off-roader Jimny 4x4 in 2003. The public also took notice of the controversy that introduced the very practical 8-seater SUV subcompact minivan in 2005 as well as one of the country's most inexpensive brand new compact hatch, the Alto in 2007.

Viable option

Indeed, the Suzuki brand has become a viable option for those hunting for best value for money as well as front-drive reliability.

Those days, when buyers think of Suzuki, they now think of the Alto as well as the all-new Alto K10, the sleek-looking Celerio, Jimny, the all-new Swift, SX4 Aero sedan, SX4 Crossover minivan, the APV and of course, the Grand Vitara SUV.

To Suzuki Philippines, small isn't a bad thing at all. Rather, it is a statement considering that its most popular models are currently the Celerio and the APV.

Numbers don't lie, Suzuki Philippines has already sold over 7,000 units (1,329 as of October Canopi figures) and is on its way to exceeding its 2010 sales figure (at 7,733).

Very interesting

The Celerio is a very interesting model that straddles the line as the bigger brother to the Alto and a smaller sibling to the Swift. It kept the weight to a minimum and with such a compact frame, running cost is reduced.

In fact, the manufacturer's estimation of the Celerio joined the lowest fuel consumption in the 2009 E10 Fuel Economy Run conducted by the Department of Energy (DOE) when it registered an average fuel consumption of 34.3 km/l after covering 117 kilometers from the Energy Department office in Taguig City to Subic, Olongapo City and back.

Indeed, Suzuki Philippines had succeeded in convincing city folks who wanted a small car that offers style and enjoyment together.

The APV on the other hand, is on its 2nd generation with the APV Type II now in cars-ers. Ogami-mimic an 8-seater GLX or luxury 7-seater SGS versions. Both feature new coil-spring rear suspension, bigger fuel tank, and improved electronic control unit.

In November, Suzuki Philippines also rolled out the Suzuki Alto K10, another version of one of the best selling vehicles.

Powered by a more powerful, 1.0 liter K10B engine, the Alto K10 is packed with an improved suspension, new cabin type five-speed transmission, super brake system, front power windows, power door locks, AM/FM/CD radio and more-than-room for rear seat passengers—already-enticing features for a car that retails at P482,000.

Year of the CATS

CATS celebrates two milestones this year

By Alvin Uy

CATS Motors Inc., the country's distributor for Mercedes-Benz and the Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep brands, have a lot to celebrate this 2011. First off, Mercedes-Benz celebrated its 125th anniversary with a huge party at the Open, Resorts World Manila last February while this year also marked the 70th founding year of the Jeep. Known as "King of the road", the Jeep proved the country well during the dark days of World War II and CATS celebrated its founding year by handing together with several vintage military Jeep owners during a recent Jeep Jamboree dubbed as "Season's Jeepings" which was recently organized by members of the Military Vehicles Collectors Club of the Philippines (MVCCP) and MLI Auto Enterprises at the historic Nut Grasslawn in Clark Air Base, Pampanga. Held last November, a number of the event's participants came in and marched in their reproduction WWII military uniforms and revived the much battle complete with period vehicles.

On the social calendar of CATS, they have been quite active this year. For their American friends, they organized the "Jeep Thrill-off road event" in an off-road trail in Pampanga using the Grand Cherokee, much to the delight of the local 4x4 enthusiasts. Fans of the tri-star German brand couldn't get enough of the 3-day Mercedes-Benz Driving Experience held at the Subic International Airport, where some of their powerful AMG models were given full throttle as professional training drivers were flown from Germany to give technical sessions for safe high-speed driving and maneuvers. Aside from that, CATS also organized a driving event for its all-new C-Class for its customers and the media. This month also marked the return of a regular series of its MMG Power Breakfast runs, a monthly gathering of AMG Mercedes-Benz owners doing fun runs usually on early Sunday mornings to give their high-performance cars a regular dose of vehicular cardio exercise. Lately, former Formula One greats Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard were in town hosted by Johnson Wallace and TW Steel respectively. Both F1 drivers are Mercedes-Benz brand ambassadors and are ex-clusives had a field day during their visit.

For its products, CATS introduced the following Mercedes-Benz models - the new-generation C-Class last August; CLK 63 AMG last July and the new GLK model last October. Other product debuts included the CLS AMG and E 63 AMG high performance sedans as well as the C 63 AMG Coupe. Besides this, CATS also launched in line of Mercedes-Benz Autos trucks to the commercial vehicle market. As for its expansion and brands, the Dodge Durango Citadel and the muscular Dodge Challenger had its debut last June while the new Jeep Grand Cherokee was launched last March at the Subic well fest. Although the first batch of the all-new Chrysler 300C came in last November, the official launch is slated sometime early 2012.

As of October, its 2011 sales for Mercedes-Benz had totaled 515 units with a 4.47 percent growth. It is the second largest market share with BMW edging it by 59 units for the 10-month period. Total number of units sold in this segment as of October this year was 2,301 units while these cars launch currently hold the market share. Overall growth rate as of the said month is a mere 1.4% percent as three brands - Volvo, Porsche and MINI ended up in the negative growth territory. Aside from the two dominant German brands, all the other premium car brands - Lexus, Jaguar and Audi had enjoyed positive growth for 2011. CATS also opened its Mercedes-Benz and Chrysler dealership brands early this month adding to its Greenhills, Makati and Global City locations. Aside from this, CATS plans to launch its multi-storey expansion building located beside its Greenhills, EDSA headquarters early next year.

Re-igniting the passion for Chevy

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Chevrolet dealerships, Cebu, Cdo Manila, South Edsa and Greenhills Edsa) and appointed four new dealer partners (Batchoco, Cagayan de Oro, Gaisano-ersalli and Nueva Ecija), bringing TCCCI's total dealer partners to 10 from only 12 in 2010.

CONVENANT. As of 2011, TCCCI joined 513 other companies in the Integrity Initiative of the European Chamber of Commerce, American Chamber of Commerce, Makati Business Club and the Management Association of the Philippines. Explaining this Corporate Social Responsibility project, Arcilla said: "The management team made a unanimous decision that we would be a car company in covenant with God and community. By covenant, we mean that we made a commitment to do what is right, not just in the business of selling cars, but in enriching the lives of those in our community and being instruments of positive change in our country."

Taking all the above into account, it looks like Chevrolet became one of the fastest growing automotive brands in the Philippines this year. "This passion for the brand," Arcilla says, "paved the way for Chevy's positive performance despite the negative industry growth and made it possible for us to achieve that year's accomplish-ments and numerous recognitions."

Nissan: Untapped potential

THE X-Trail performs the best in an off-road track in Clarkfield, Pampanga

THE NEW X-Trail debuted at the Auto Show.

By Jason R. Ang

2011 was a year of mixed results for the Nissan brand and its two distributors: Universal Motors Corp. (UMC) for commercial vehicles and Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. (NMPI) for passenger cars. UMC sold 5,222 units, down around 6.9 percent from the previous year. NMPI registered 2,425 unit sales, good for a 3.4 percent increase.

UMC continued its Go Van, Go Business (GVGB) program. UMC presents this core of its Urvan utility vehicle as a vital component in business and this program encompasses as a means for Filipinos to improve their quality of life. In May 2011, the program celebrated five years of helping 8,000 families and creating 7,000 direct jobs for the customers that UMC calls "The Go-vanites." UMC also launched a new variant of its Navara pickup called the Terbo-navara.

UMC and NMPI fostered an improving customer satisfaction. J.D. Power Asia Pacific ranked the highest in the 2011 Philippine Sales Satisfaction Index Study. Nissan showed a marked improvement in terms of customer service and performed particularly well in the delivery process and salesperson factors. Nissan Cebu opened a branch in Bohol.

The two Nissan distributors also joined forces to bring a contingent of rarities to the bi-annual Tokyo Motor Show. Led by CEO Carlos Ghosn and COO Toshiyuki Shiga, Nissan showed the extent of a zero-emission future, centered around electric vehicles. The Leaf, the world's first "affordable" all-electric vehicle, was in prominent display, including an exhilarating Nismo racing variant. At the Nissan exhibit highlighted, Nissan has a strong lineup of vehicles in the international market, including potential and interesting cars like the Murah, Cube, and Juke. We hope that the distributors will be introduce more interesting models like these in the near future. If these vehicles are launched in the Philippine market, we expect that Nissan will be able to tap into its massive potential.

NISSAN Navara

SUBARU

seen to make waves in 2012

THE XV Crosstrek SUV model

THE BRZ Coupe first seen at the Tokyo Motor Show

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IT'S MORE THAN JUST OIL. IT'S LIQUID ENGINEERING. Castrol

By Alden Uy

Motor Image Philippines, the country's distributor for Subaru cars had a mediocre year for 2011 due to a low production output globally as it is still reeling from the devastating effects of the great Japan earthquake and the giant tsunami waves that ensued, destroying a large number of production facilities for a number of Japanese car manufacturers and its parts suppliers. There were no new major model changes in its line up for the year, it only introduced the Minor Change Forester model. From spectacular growths in recent years enjoyed by a strong brand following by a long list of satisfied Subaru owners, a no growth scenario is considered bad for this high performance niche brand.

Subaru owners and enthusiasts need not fret though, as next year could be another banner year as Nicky Martens, the country manager for Motor Image Philippines said that they will be launching the new Impreza model and introducing the crossover XV model as well as the beautiful BRZ coupe. Although Subaru's market share in the automobile market locally is only about 1 percent but it's begun to set up shop in various locations, starting with one in San Fernando, Pampanga last year, it has opened two more locations - in Cebu and Mabalacat, Mandaluyong. Subaru owners would not only expect better convenience for their after sales service but market share would be expected to increase as well.

The brand is made popular in this region largely by the efforts of Motor Image Group, the parent company of Motor Image Philippines who is also the distributor for Subaru for other South East Asian markets including Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and Hong Kong. A member of the Hutchison Group of Companies based in Singapore, Motor Image popularized the brand by taking Guinness Record holder Ross Savill as the brand evangelist and event performer in major automotive shows including the Manila International Auto Show regularly held during summer at the World Trade Center. Ross Swill made another appearance in the huge and successful Thailand Motor Expo last march introducing the regional launch of the XV crossover SUV model to the press and public as he performed his record-breaking stunt maneuvers that never fail to impress the crowd. Swill is slated to perform again at the Manila International Auto Show this coming March 29 to April 1st, making it his 6th appearance in this country.

THE Subaru Impreza Challenge

AUTOMOTIVE year-ender

THE much improved Montero Sports has been an instant hit among customers

MITSUBISHI executives Dante Santos (left) and Asher Reyes present the awards won by the Montero in the CJ Awards

Formidable contender

By Charles E. Bahay

THE FACT that Mitsubishi became the country's best-selling brand last May—edging out perennial leader Toyota after posting a 26.6 percent market share—could mean a lot more than a diamond emblem to solidly entrenched in the minds of Filipino customers.

As one of the few most successful auto brands in the Philippines, Mitsubishi is aiming even higher. Mitsubishi Motors Philippines EVP Dato Tan Fernando is ready challenged his team to sell around 50,000 units in 2012.

The target is not an ambitious one considering that MMPC is already rolling over

FORMIDABLE B5 »

'Mitsubishi projects that the auto markets in the five Asean countries will expand by 30 percent from the current 2.4 million units to about 3 million units in 2015'

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Hot new cars to watch out for in 2012

By Butch Santos

IF YOU add up the numbers 2, 0 1 and 2, you'll come up with 5. The number five is certain as the Far Eastern cultures right by change. And 2012 is perhaps the best year yet to consider changing that tired old jalopy in the driveway for something new, exciting, safer and more enjoyable to drive. And it's the big because in the last five years, the market has grown to new heights, but more importantly, as a sign of an ever evolving and maturing market, it still road engineers have been introducing and are slowly bringing products by most to niche-specific vehicles which cater to more specialized needs. Gone are the days when you had to choose between a hatch, a B and C, and then respective x, y and z models, in black, white, green and maroon.

In the small car / hatchback market, two significant new entries will be the fifth all-new Rio, available in both reduced hatchback which will really give more options to new car buyers. Representing the other 50 by land is Hyundai's first All-new hatchback, powered exclusively with a diesel engine, and a sedan variant also featuring diesel power. Hyundai has a winner here in a small car with diesel power means fast, fun and fuel efficient motoring, and lower overall running costs. Mitsubishi, having made a huge comeback in recent years thanks to their diesel-packed power-punch of the Strada and Montero Sport, have also unveiled a close-to-production small car, the new Mirage 5-door hatchback powered by a new 1.2-cylinder engine with 1.6 to 1.2 liters of displacement. Expect it to make an appearance by 1st quarter of this year, a year after its unveiling at the Tokyo Motor Show 2011. The arrival of the Mirage number should also bring a bit of warmth and nostalgia to a generation who grew up riding their Mitsu's and Dat'l small car a generation ago. But to be realistic, rumors are circulating that the all-new Toyota Yaris 5-door hatchback might be released soon as it's been available in foreign markets for a generation now. The new Yaris features a longer wheelbase with a bigger boot to help ride comfort and increase practicality and cargo space. But no other source said the Yaris will remain the same, with only a minor change for more cost-conscious foreign markets enjoy the new Yaris. And that's very good possibility. What is sure is that an all-new Avanza is coming out in January of 2012. They should help people in need of a budget people mover. Honda on the other hand is rumored to give its Jazz/ subcompact looking city the City a minor change / face lift as it recently validated on.

C-segment Class

Moving to the next, C-segment class vehicles, Ford's all-new 3rd generation Focus and Honda's much-awaited 9th generation Civic lead the race. While Honda's unveiled the Civic to other markets, and Ford's enjoyed selling the Focus in Europe, its home market, it is unclear when exactly those two vehicles (and hatchback for the Blue Oval) will make a grand entry in the ASEAN market, specifically in the Philippines. Honda's been having troubles of late, but hopefully a new Civic model will revive interest in the brand as it solidifies its status as a high-demand preowned vehicle, probably what the Philippine market is soaking up and consuming as much as it can. Ford's unofficially hinted that the Focus can be out as early as end of 1st quarter to start of 2nd quarter next year, but has also hinted that there are other models that might come out first before the new Focus goes on sale. Mitsubishi also plans to release a new Lancer variant which should work heavy on the B- to C- class segments. As an unconfirmed source has said that it will straddle the budgets of low-mid C-segment shoppers with the high-end side of B-segment shoppers. Subaru's new Impreza sedan has been making impressive historic appearances over the past few months. A launch is expected towards the end of 2012. The big news is that the top-model, the brand-new WRX sedan will be available in both the Impreza line-up so as not to be constrained by the limitations of an essentially mass-market nameplate. Lastly Mazda's also-coming new will be a 4.5-new Mazda 5 sedan, which has had line-welding suddenly for a long time as the sporty Mazda 3 has found new friends since its launch years ago and has topped a growing following since.

Pick-up market

The pick-up market is heating up as well with Ford and Chevrolet branding set sold next year with the Colorado pick-up from the brow-ide boys, and the Blue Oval's small-to-mid-segment Ford Ranger and its bumper 3.2 liter 5-cylinder turbodiesel engine. The Americans invented the pick-up, the ASEAN market evolved it into something more fitting for our tight, poorly surfaced roads, and the Americans have decided to show us Asians how it should be done, even for our own backyard. Other than the usual Japanese truck makers should definitely be excited about Diesel-powered cars has also released an all-new 3-Mitz pick-up replacement in Thailand, but the prospects of it coming into our country are slim to none (unless if some industry insiders are to be believed. Hopefully Isuzu changes its mind and brings them in pronto!

Premium small car

In the premium small car market, Mercedes-Benz has announced that's new B-Class 5-door hatchback will be introduced sometime next year, following in the heels of BMW's successful 1-Series launch just a few weeks back. The two German marques are joined by Audi, who have just very recently started selling the new Audi A1, plus will arrive entry-level vehicle, the Audi Q3, pitching itself directly against BMW's X1.

One last up, and arguably second to the world standard, joker at BMW, though local fans prefer Aston Contenders Group fans said that an all-new 3-Series will break ground sometime in 2012. The 3-Series has always been the dominant benchmark of aspiring professionals climbing up the corporate ladder. The new 3-Series should hopefully take the fight to Audi's A4 and Merc's recently facelifted C-Class, currently the sales leaders in this segment, and Lexus' own IS sports sedan.

Speaking of Lexus, as will new 6th-edition should also launch, more conservative coupe, and with it, a hybrid-variant propelling the 6's hybrid GS into 4th series motored compli. Hopefully this new 6th will have bigger rear legroom, the primary complaint of potential buyers to their segment. It's a cute sedan, in a segment overcrowded with Germans non-spec models. Accompanying the new 6th setting is a CC200, But once a base-off road / all-condition based mid-sized SUV, the sporting partner of Lexus' own RX, which causes quite a ruckus has sub-sixteen and smoothly paved roads. Mercedes-Benz is also bringing an all-new ML-SUV, and Chrysler's also releasing a new Sebring variant, and possibly new Jeep models and variants as well.

Entry level sports car

In the entry-level sports car segment, things are also heating up in a subterranean drawn first released by unofficially, / officially announcing that the 2-door lively 86Z, which had been making the motor car show rounds world-wide, might make it to our shores before mid-2011, possibly in the 2-Million segment. Co-developer and partner Toyota has been cagey of its media any announcements of its availability, but hopefully we'll see the GT-86 variant as well, by the 2nd half of 2012 if rumors are to be believed. A fun-filled Hyundai Genesis coupe, with engines now equipped with direct petrol injection will surely boost things up in the 2.0-liter, 2.0-turbo variant give a bike specs as nearly as 270hp, and the 3.1-liter V6 will step up to as much as 340hp if rumors are to be believed. Unfortunately, we need yet an whether the Veloster sports-coupe-ram even-ever SUV will make it to our shores, the Kia's executive sedan, sporting right above the Sonata is also rumored to appear next year, giving you more choices in the segment dominated by the Camry, Honda's Accord, and lately Nissan's Teana and Infiniti's sports-inclined Legacy. The US market just received a new Camry. The ASEAN Camry is quite different from the US-type one, but is some logical that a new 86/GT Camry might be on its way soon as well. Hopefully we'll see some cars by the 2nd half of 2012 as well.

Ultra-luxury segment

Going up the premium sides, luxury segment, Porsche's all-new V12 sports car code-named Type 991 will soon hit our shores as early as Q1, followed sometime later in the year with an all-new Boxster drop-top roadster. The Boxster hasn't been as popular in the country known producing the full-beauty experience of a 911, but nonetheless the Porsche should be a thrilling drive under the glorious summer sun. Big news has to be the branding of the Lamborghini brand in the Philippines, with the local PSA-backed outfit bringing in a group of Gallardos, plus a rumored two units of the Aventador LP700-4 (one of which is here already) and four units of the amazing Gallardo LP570-4 Super Trofeo Stradale, which is limited to just 150 units worldwide. But the Penang Red is soo to be customs in local importer Rolando Sports has begun accepting orders for the amazing Peninsula P400 Sedan. Bentley, Rolls-Royce, Aston Martin, Bugatti, Mclaren sports car and Ferrari's Legend's here compact sports car images.

The other important questions in enthusiasts and non-chest experts' minds is, what will the brands are rumoring into country soon? Who is finally bringing in Volkswagen? Will PSE really annex our market and while-out the Daimler 300? And can we persist that Cadillac should also enter the local market, but who will bring it in? And what about Bentley, the last luxury marques owned by Volkswagen that is yet to be represented in our country?

Much of this is speculation as nobody's wanted to officially confirm much at all. But no thing's for sure, next year's car choices will be for fun, for sure, more exciting and more cost-prudent. Insane for all of us car-buying public!

Formidable **contender**

Pretzpage B|S 1

10,000 units as of November despite the Japanese earthquake/tsunami and the Thailand flood tragedies. Mitsubishi Sport sold 11,120 units. Adventure, 8,310 units. 1,800 GL, 5,377 units, and the Strada, 3,208 sold leading the sales charge).

Incidentally, the Montero Sport has become MMPC's top performer, remaining on top of the country's mid-sized SUV segment with a 46.7 percent market share.

VGT version

Montero Sport and Strada sales grew further as MMPC added in February, new variants that feature the variable geometry turbo (VGT).

With a variable geometry turbo technology, ample air becomes available even at low engine speeds thanks to vanes that direct air into the turbine change angle (or geometry) allowing. This changes as the exhaust gases increase, provides a constant flow of air and pressure throughout the revolution range giving the new version of the Montero Sport and Strada additional 15 horsepower and 75Nm of torque.

To experience the difference, MMPC brought the motoring media to Clark International Speedway. The company even invited Mitsubishi's two-time Pat Boda-Dakkar Rally Champion driver Hiroshi Masuoka to show participants exactly what the VGT version of the Montero Sport can actually do.

MMPC did some modifications at the track, adding an off-road special stage specifically for the occasion.

Aside from the dirt course, a slalom and braking area was also added along Clark International Speedway's main straight, allowing participants to feel the full mobility of power and braking of the vehicle on-road.

The impact was immediately felt as MMPC recorded a 7.4 percent growth in the first four months of the year with a total of 13,940 units sold.

A COUPLE receives a P500,000 rebate as winners of a promo from Mitsubishi motorbikes.

Set to expand

Fortunately to continue MMPC sterling sales performance will continue in 2012 as Mitsubishi Motors continues its plan to expand by at least 20 percent in the first seven countries including the Philippines.

"With reliable sales Dominoing race in the Brazil and in Japan, Japanese and endurance including Mitsubishi are building new plants to load boost Asia, whose sales remain robust amid strong economic growth," he said.

Mitsubishi Motors expects that the auto markets in the five Asean countries that include namely Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines will expand by 30 percent from the current 2.4 million units to about 3 million units in 2015 or an increase of 600,000 units from the current 6.5 percent to 12 percent in fiscal 2015.

While Mitsubishi Motors' production in Thailand is its global production hub, the other four countries including the Philippines will continue to produce models for its local market. At the moment, MMC manufactures the Adventure, L300 cab-and-chassis, L300 Versa Van, Fuso light and medium duty trucks and bus chassis and conventionally the all-new Lancer EX.

Next year would also be most interesting as MMPC is set to bring the all-new Mirage to our shores. This compact hatch will definitely rouse the market considering it has been some time since Mitsubishi has a car that competes in this segment. Rivals to compete with including Toyota, Honda, Ford, Mazda, Suzuki, Chevrolet, Hyundai and Kia each have one!

Auto loans seen to grow even stronger in 2012

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE IMPRECISENCY of the most transparent system in Metro Manila, unprecedented decline in loan interest rates as well as the availability of a multitude of car models to choose from have all combined to make the auto loan sector a very bright spot in the country's banking industry.

According to the latest data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, auto loans, now at their highest at P138.2 billion in the quarter ending June this year, up by 3.3 percent from the previous quarter's P134.2 billion and by 11.8 percent from P123.6 billion in the same period of 2010.

Universal/commercial banks were the main drivers of growth, the BSP said, posting quarter-on-quarter expansion of 5.1 percent and year-on-year growth of 23.6 percent. Thrift banks, on the other hand, posted over the same periods a 1.3 percent and 17.4 percent expansion in auto loans.

With demand expected to be bullish to surge next year given expectations of a modest economic growth in the Philippines despite the debt crisis in Europe and the financial difficulties in the United States — the two traditional engines of global economic growth — the country's leading consumer banks have many reasons to be bullish.

Jose Mhel Nartz CEO Tony Meloto says sold that the bank is bullish about the growth prospects of auto loans in 2012 because the bank is confident that the Philippines will perform well next year in all macroeconomic indicators such as foreign exchange reserves, balance of payments and investments are looking good.

"This is on spite of the challenges in Europe and the United States. Also, the year up because of how the supply bottlenecks in Japan and Thailand will be resolved and third, the prevailing low interest rate environment is conducive to auto loans," Meloto explained.

"In East West, we are looking at another banner year for auto. We are confident that all our preparations in the past to take advantage of the interest environment will bear fruit in 2012. Auto is a conducive sector for us," he added.

By figures are already encouraging with the November 2011 auto loan bookings growing by a hefty 41.4 percent versus the same month last year. The target is to increase total loan bookings next year by as much as 10 percent.

United Coconut Planters Bank is likewise riding high on the auto loan wave, booking P3.3 billion in auto loans so far this year, up from P2.1 billion last year. The usual term loan is five years although most opt for chose to have four terms. Minimum loan amount is P180,000 with a 20 percent equity requirement.

UCPB president and CEO Jerry Ribaya is confident that the demand will continue to increase in 2012.

"Our target in 2012 is to expand our consumer loan portfolio, particularly auto loans by 27 percent. (CPB's net income in 2011 should reach P3 billion, 20 percent increase versus 2010," Ribaya said.

Philippine Savings Bank also said that the auto loan portfolio this year has grown faster than the industry, but was tempered by the series of events that affected the automotive industry and the worldwide economy as a whole.

"Industry sales have declined by about 4 percent compared to same period last year due to competition among dealers. It could have declined even further without the aggressive acceptance criteria of banks and various low equity packages being promoted by dealers," PSBank said in a statement.

Nevertheless, PSBank said that auto loans comprise a significant share to the bank's total loan portfolio due to the introduction of various promos and intensified investments that ultimately benefit clients.

These include PSBank's Online Dealer System (ODS) where car dealers are provided a link to the bank's application and booking system to give them direct access, allowing for an even faster and more convenient service to clients.

"This is also a first in the industry and one of PSBank's way of making our Auto Loan "Simple Lang, Mananahan". These and other features provide great convenience for customers, making them to avail and refer friends and relatives for their car loan needs," PSBank said.

With the banks expected to continue to raise the level of competition and services next year, one can only expect more cars to reward the already filled up lanes in 2012.

What's hot for the aftermarket

By Samuel Lizon

IN MY years as a player in the aftermarket industry, keeping a step ahead of the competition is a key element to be competitive. This explains why in the past couple of years, I have made up visits to the Tokyo Auto Salon and Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association (SEMA) in Las Vegas part of my annual exodus to remain abreast with what's hot and what's not in the aftermarket industry. Going to international aftermarket shows provides a sneak peek into what's going to be a lot for the rest of the year.

Aside from noticing the dominance of hybrid cars being customized by Japanese tuners, the year that was in Tokyo saw the emergence of big black rims and cars wrapped in foil. It seemed that the Japanese tuners have shifted to promoting black as the new bling.

For 2012, the local aftermarket industry will see the popularity of matte finish and polished lipped rims to hit the market. Pick brands like Cobiness and BBS joining the fray for a bigger slice of the consumer pie. European brands will now have more choices of aftermarket rims to choose from. This is good news since the Philippines is still considered as a Japanese car market.

Rims with deep polished lips for luxury sedans will also be hit, because aside from vast aesthetic improvements, big lip rims also provide better traction and performance. The opportunists can to set up would be the 350C, Mercedes Benz S-Class and the BMW 5 and 7 Series sedans.

Interior-wise specialists Wood Modifying exclusive distributors of Bilstein and HKS in the country is also expected to beef up their inventory with coil-over suspension systems. According to Arvin Lim of Motiss, his company will also concentrate in promoting suspension systems for compact to large size European and Japanese SUV's. "The load-off road scene is getting bigger by the year. For 2012, Wheel Gallery and Bilstein have teamed up to design and build 22X performance package kits for a variety of SUV variants" added Lim.

Another hot ticket item for next year is Amp Lines's custom vans and buses. After car-ving out his name as the King of bodykits in the local scene, Lines's talent and creativity for transforming ordinary vehicles into rolling art on wheels, has created over-a-ton and buses. His latest creation, the "Batman" bus, recently got the most number of hits in this paper's tech page. Prior to the Batquine custom bus, Lines has also done the vans of big name celebrities such as Kim Chiu, Albert Martinez, Gerald Anderson, Kris Aquino and President Noynoy's campaign bus which came equipped with its own Presidential bedroom, a traveling room and bathroom. So if you would want to transform that garden variety van into a mobile bedroom, you know who to call.

Big three make it big in 2011

By Jason K. Ang

FORD, GM, and Chrysler—known as America's Big Three carmakers—made it big in the Philippines in 2011.

Need cash on the demand for the Fiesta, Everest, and the all-new Explorer to record a 51 percent sales growth this year. The Fiesta has become the country's best-selling hatchback, its success first for a brand facing tough Japanese and Korean competitors.

The all-new Explorer has seen strong demand after its launch. Its stylish good looks, abundance of features, and value-for-money pricing have had the dealers' conversation booklets sold. The Everest SUV, the first true pick-up based SUV introduced in the Philippines, continues to do well, thanks to revised styling and attractive pricing.

Ford is poised to have a strong 2012 as well, with the updated Ranger on its way. The all-new Fiesta and an innovative 2.0-liter turbocharged version of the Explorer will also be in the mixfor 2012.

Chevrolet, under new distributor The Covenant Car Company (TCCCI), has also been busy. TCCCI has built up Chevy's dealership network from 12 outlets to 16, and aims to increase further to 18 by 2012. The Cruze compact sedan was the restyled Car of the Year award for 2010-11, impressing journalists with its solid structure and responsive handling. The Captiva seven-seat crossover and Spark subcompact continue to be competitive as well. Chevrolet boosted sales by 50 percent compared to 2010, with the Spark and Cruze then growing by 60 percent.

Chrysler under CATS Motors launched several interesting products in 2011. The Jeep Grand Cherokee was put through its paces on the Angeles-Sto. Mesoapotro Trails.

The new Grand Cherokee, now on a monocoque chassis, pleased through the roadly trails and climbed with an assured capability that was almost as good as its Wrangler stablemate.

CATS launched the Dodge Durango SUV, Challenger coupe, and Charger sedan in its Aspire-powered batchmate. The years was capped by the release of the all-new 300C, with distinctive styling and a much-improved interior.

FDP executives attend a meeting of Ford Club Philippines

THE FIESTA sparked the sales momentum for Ford.

Ford: Climbing new heights in 2011

FORD brought a large contingent of marketing officers to the Ranger launch in Thailand.

FORD GROUP Philippines (FGP) was firing on all cylinders in 2011. Sales of vehicles under the Ford brand grew by a formidable 51 percent. Behind the growth were vehicles such as the Fiesta, Everest, Explorer, and Ranger. The Fiesta, for its first full year of sales, sold 5,110 units.

The fuel-efficient, yet fun-to-drive subcompact was apparently so many a buyer's dicatellar for the year. The Car Awards Group concurred, awarding the Fiesta Best Sub-Compact 2010-2011. Ford ranked second in 2011 20 Nueva Asia Pacific's Joint Satisfaction Index (SSI) survey for the Philippines.

Also impressive are the 2,700 unit sales of Everest (37 percent increase from 2010), 18,159 units of Ranger (+9 percent), and 834 units of Escape. The Explorer, debuting in an all-new version in 2011, notched up a seamless 168 percent increase in sales. The Explorer 3.5 V6 Limited is already getting accolades for its driving performance, comfort, style, and level of all, value for money. The Explorer has potential to connect this year match those of European SUVs twice its price.

Ford chalked up 8,805 unit sales from January to November 2011, boosting market share to 7.4 percent, worse to fall year 2010 market share of 5.9 percent. Ford conducted several major activities for 2011. FGP was the largest exhibitor at the Manila International Auto Show with its massive 1,800 square meter display area. The Fiesta and Focus participated in fuel economy runs, including an exclusive-style session for the Focus Diesel. The company continued on its advocacy for road safety with the annual Driving Skills for Life seminars in empowering a proactive approach to boost customers' driving safety skills.

Ford celebrated the first anniversary of the Fiesta's launch in October, with a gathering of Fiesta owners at Bonifacio Global City. It also held its annual sales and service skills Olympics in November. Ford capped the year with the 7th annual Henry Ford Awards. PSE set for Toms Manaut won for Best Automotive Online Feature.

Randy Kintges, FGP president, said, "2011 has been a fantastic year for Ford. We celebrated our first year anniversary of the Ford Fiesta which continues to be the best-selling hatchback in the country, launched the All-New Explorer and have won coveted honors at this year's most respected Awards Programs."

"Starting with the All-New Ranger, Ford will introduce eight all-new One Ford global vehicles in ASEAN over the next five years—significantly expanding our Ford showroom line-up and introducing our brand to many new customer segments."

Ford is set to continue on an upward trajectory in 2012, on the heels of three major product launches: the all-new Ranger pickup, the Ford Explorer powered by a 2.0-liter turbocharged gasoline engine, dubbed the EcoBoost, and perhaps most significantly, the all-new Focus. If the 90-car can maintain its driving pleasure, style, and fuel efficiency as the Fiesta has, the Blue Oval may very well take the compact sedan/hatchback class by storm in 2012.-Jason K. Ang

Leadership changes mark the year in the auto industry

By Charles E. Bahan

TWENTY ELEVEN may be remembered as the year of executive turnovers in the automotive industry.

Now this may be a "normal and routine" happenstance but it not been for the fact that the industry had just seen individuals taking over the top job those recent years.

This can be a tough assignment but with the way they are successfully enrolling in their new jobs, expect something more momentous brewing on their respective turf.

Early in the year, July 21 to be exact, Asian Carmakers Corp. and Columbian Autocar Corp. chair Jose Ch. Alvarez surprised the industry as he introduced two ladies who will both be taking the helm at his two respective companies. Maricar Cruz-Isbel then a who assumed the top post as ACC, the country's official distributor of BMW, and Gina Domingo, who takes charge of CAC, which takes over of the Kia brand of vehicles in the in the Philippines.

Bueza, who replaced Bobby Stanley, is bringing with her 10 years worth of expertise in the field of marketing and sales as well as media relations, having worked with Honda Cars and Ford.

Gina Domingo, who replaced Felix Mabilog, Jr., started working in the automotive industry in 1989 working with Toyota, General Motors and then to Ford.

Two months after, on April 1, Honda Cars Phils. Inc. also announced the appointment of Tatsuya Shimizu as its new president and GM, taking over Hiroshi Shimizu, who has been HCPI president for the past four years.

Tatsuya, who was formerly the marketing director of Honda Siel Cars, India Ltd., is now on his fourth overseas assignment, having worked in Germany and Italy.

Also on that same date, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. transitions to new leaders, appointing Hikonobuo Hoshino as president and CEO.

Subaru, who was formerly Mitsubishi Motors Corp. vice corporate GM, replaced Masahiko Ishii who completed his three-year stint in the country.

Then on June 13, Isuzu Philippines Corp. announced the appointment of Takashi Tanaka as the company's new EVP, replacing Yuki Enzo who just concluded a 18-year stint in the country.

Previously the GM for market research and development of Mitsubishi Corp.'s Isuzu Business Division in Japan, Tanaka takes charge of IPC's sales, finance and administration.

Tanaka is bringing with him 30 years of experience, the most recent assignment was with the Tri Petch Isuzu Sales of Thailand, working with the dynamic manager for sales planning and then as department manager for dealer sales.

Almost canceled is Dr. Wayne Lee assuming the position of president and CEO of Universal Motors Corp. after Elizabeth Lee resigned in June.

UMC, which concentrates on the production and marketing of Hinata light commercial vehicles is the country's largest and oldest 100-percent Filipino-owned assembler and distributor.

Lee, who obtained his PhD in Finance from the University of California regarded himself veteran of the auto industry, having observed his father excel in the business for over 50 years.

Lucas Manila, the exclusive distributor of Lancia vehicles in the Philippines, also saw batch-ship changes as Manila Businessmen takes the helm as EVP replacing Hiroyuki Tsuda.

MITSUBISHI: Shimizu

HONDA: Hatsuno

KIA: Domingo

BMW: Perez

super LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sevan San Juan Subeditor Pam Pastor

DEANNE and her sister Diane with kiddies at Saint Rita Orphanage

An afternoon at Saint Rita

Super reader Deanne Bañares wanted to make kids happy this Christmas. She did that and more

By Pam Pastor

IT HASN'T been an easy year for Deanne Bañares. As a student at Ateneo taking up AB Psychology, meeting the demands of her senior year has meant giving up time for some of the things she's passionate about—like helping little kids. "But it's always been in my head—I wanted to

MAKEMEMOOM C2

SUPER HOOKUP

FOR TWO weeks, we asked our readers to send us their Christmas wishes. In this special issue, we'll show you how we made some of them come true.

And here's the best part—we're not stopping when Christmas is over. Super will be hooking you up all year round. Send us your wishes at super@inquirer.com.ph. If you don't have a wish but would like to help grant them, you may e-mail us at the same address.

And we're hoping you'll grant Super's Christmas wish too by helping the victims of bombing. Like Page 2?]

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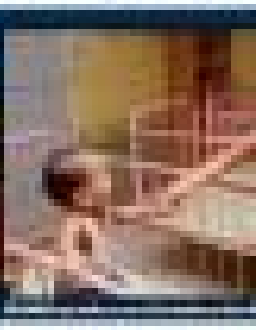
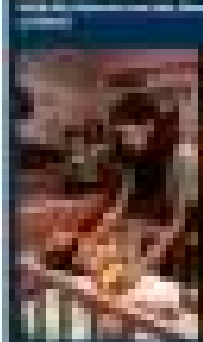
CENTURY PROPERTIES GROUP

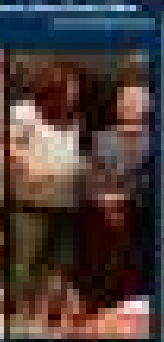
A unique festivity ended the 2 months honeymoon of Nick Vitelli, Saint Rita Parish and Sant'Angelo at Nicolosi, a charming town in the Etnean

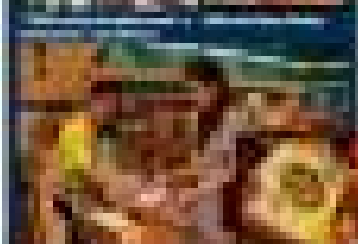
A Super honeymoon

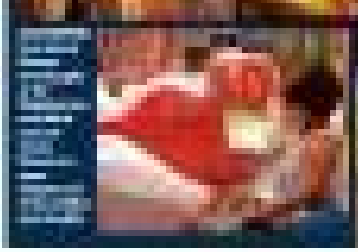
An afternoon at Saint Rita

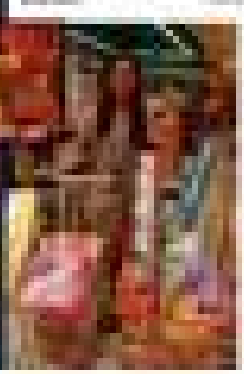


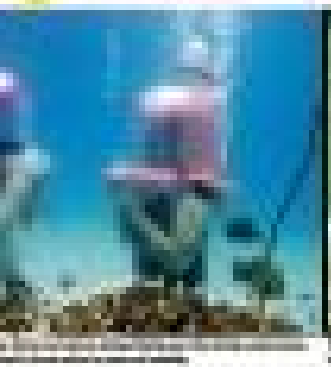


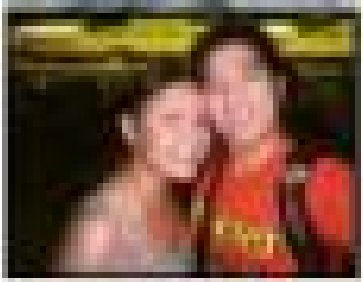




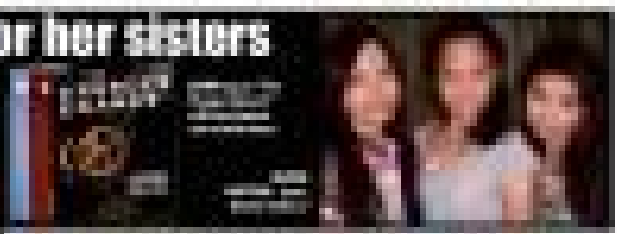








Santa for her sisters



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Repaying Mom and Dad with some R&R

By Hiro Mark M. Salvar

When writer/director Antoinette Jadaone wrote to set and said she was hoping that for Christmas, she would a 2012 commercial run for her film "Sa Isang Sulyap" (or Repaying Mom Like Luningning," we weren't exactly sure how we could grant her wish.

Sure, "Sa Isang Sulyap" is no awesome movie—it was a box-office success, losing on its week-long sold-out run at the Shang Cineplex, and this 2011 Cinema One Originals entry even on rounds during movie night—but a commercial to host rounds on big and indie-ness. It would involve a lot of money, too.

So much so we want to, our production team doesn't have enough funding to release the film on our own," said Antoinette in her letter. "Jadaone long po ang sprichito ko, hindi Mariyuvenile or Star Cinema. But the spirit is very willing, so as ayo on long per ang per kwl".

Fortunately for us, Antoinette had a second choice: a "hanging around an hundred-to-day of preparing at a function-set for her parents. Boy, who manages the family business (a construction supply company) and Aida, a housewife.

According to Antoinette, her parents have always been supportive of her and her siblings' career decisions. "Ever since I showed even just a little desire to make films, they never discouraged me even for a second, even if they know it doesn't pay much or it will make me lose money." And to show just how grateful she is for all their "hard work and patience in and ng kalawak ng pagpapakita sa aming talong magkakapatid," the brunette wanted to give her massage-loving parents a "repay

Julie Thelma Suson San Juan

LIFESTYLE Travel

JRS EXPRESS
YOUR PARTNER IN TIME

This mountain realm first entered my imagination through a beloved comic book: Tintin in Tibet

THREE chortens or stupas and a stone walkway

Designing Tibet

By Ito Matalo
Contributor

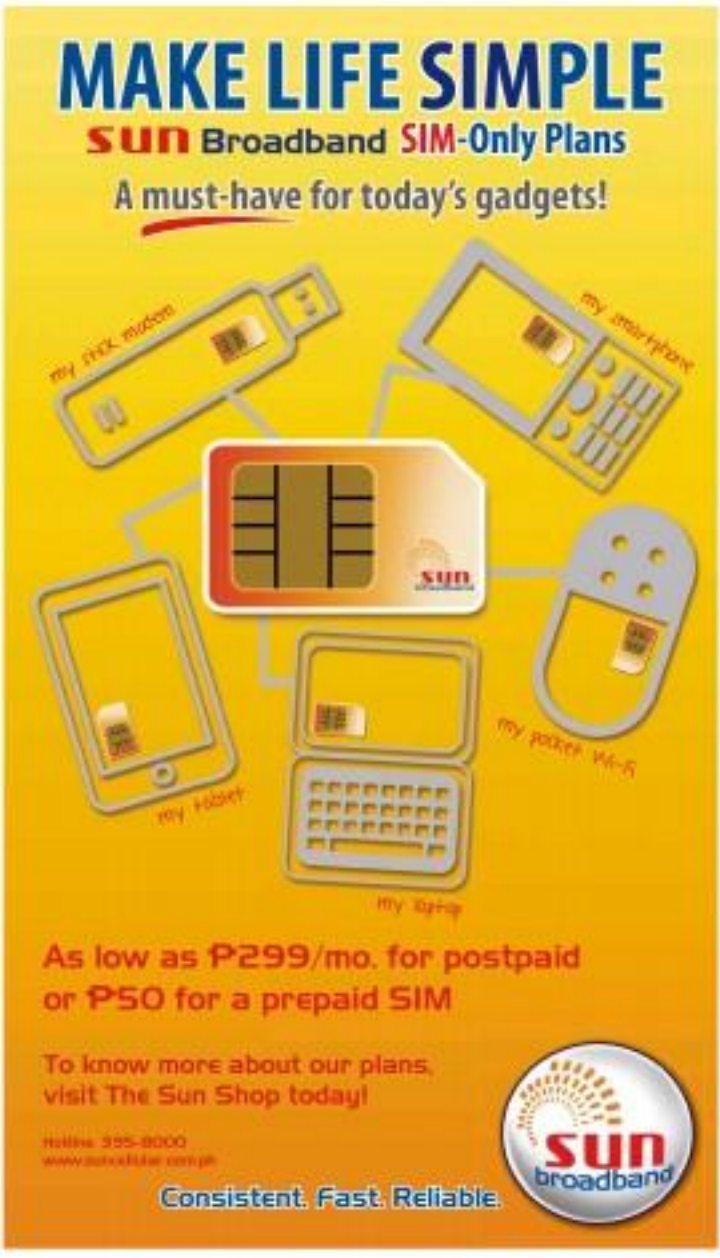
RUMMAGING through the bins of a second-hand store in Makati, I came upon a volume with a curious title: "Imagining Tibet." That's when it struck me that, indeed, the Land at the Roof of the World is a place that exists not only on this planet but in our minds. The 1997 book by Peter Goullart, "Forgotten Kingdom," and the more recent "Searching for Shangri-La," by Laurence Brahm (published in 2003), are additional examples which show how this entire region has been mythologized by writers from the West. The lovely paintings by the Russian mystic Nicholas Roerich of lonely cradle-set in an expanse of mist-shrouded peaks also helped to further enhance European fascination.

The fascination probably has something to do with the Dalai Lama himself. After all, the idea of how he was selected by ascertaining the soul for the new incarnation of the departed ruler is truly enchanting. I suppose in an increasingly callous era, such a magical way of choosing a leader is certainly worth a praise.

In my case, this mountain realm first entered my imagination through a beloved comic book, "Tintin in Tibet." As it turns out, this particular adventure is the favorite of many other fans of the young reporter. A friend of mine theorizes that this is because the story involves a selfless rescue in a faraway land. There is a journey on the icy slopes of the Himalayas, the weird but ultimately very human "Yetis," or Abominable Snowmen, the outlandishly sensible wisdom of the grand abbot, and the encounters with other forms of knowledge that took in stride clairvoyance and levitation.

Then again, as the tale of Tintin and his partners Captain Haddock, unlikely, our glimpses in the colorful illustrations the solid square buildings whose interiors were brightened by rich textiles and polychrome banners. There were the sacred monuments known as "chortens," or stupas, which held the relics of holy monks. One can even share in the sense of relief which the characters in the book must have felt when, after being knocked out by an avalanche, they awoke inside a monastery. All this made for an enchanting read, adding more images to the world's concept of the fabled place.

Given my early exposure, it was with a slight joy that, while exploring the Eastern Bank of what had once been part of the ancient territory of Tibet, I realized that I could recognize my surroundings. The



GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPPA — BY JES HIRSHA

PUGAD BABOY — BY PAT LIGSAY

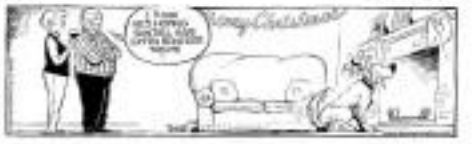
DICK TRACY — BY JOE STATON AND ANDY CLARK

LOVE-MONSTERS — BY ELIZABETH HORNGLO

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

RUBE MACHINE — BY TANNO ABRON

SEIN — BY DANIEL SHELTON



HUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TUNDRA — BY IVAN COLL

HOROSCOPES

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Today's New Moon is your fourth. Thinking about your relationships with the family, home or your life. How can you improve these relationships?

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Your new moon is in your sign today and you are going to come out with a change in your appearance or your personality. Some will like it, others will not.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Your new moon is in your fifth house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your new moon is in your fourth house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Your new moon is in your third house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Your new moon is in your second house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Your new moon is in your first house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Your new moon is in your twelfth house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Your new moon is in your eleventh house with other shared property, bonus, debt, business matters and investments. Does your work involve numbers?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Today's eclipse puts the focus on your career today. What do you really believe in? Is your career in alignment with your personal values?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Your eclipse brought to your belief system today. What do you really believe in? Is your career in alignment with your personal values? Does your career support your values?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Have you been busy with the eclipse in your sign? Eclipses can be busy times. Have you been focused? Have you been able to listen to your inner voice? Do you feel joy in what you're doing?

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more puzzles and to print new ones, go to www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	8	3	6	5	7	1	9	2
6	5	9	4	1	2	8	3	7
1	7	2	8	9	3	6	5	4
8	3	4	1	6	5	9	2	7
9	2	5	7	4	8	3	1	6
7	6	1	3	2	9	4	8	5
3	4	6	5	8	1	7	2	9
5	9	8	2	7	6	3	4	1
2	1	7	9	3	4	5	6	8

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

1		5	9				3	
					4			
			2		1			5
		8		1			5	4
				6				
9	2			7		6		
6			8		3			
			6					
	8				5	4		9

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Under to the ground
5 Shadow
10 Indian God-man
14 Lamppost's "on"
15 Kidnapping
16 Tennis ___!
17 Hall
18 Sound quality
19 Former Russian ski
20 Make it small
21 Cabbage, basically
23 Hide
24 Lots of loads
25 Word processing
26 Thanksgiving
27 Passenger vessel
28 Wedding day vehicle
29 Bring to a close
30 Bring forth
31 Hang with
32 Is a little under
33 Bathroom bathroom
34 Fix
35 Horrible laughs
36 Beach goer's item
37 Wizard's staff
38 Bagpipe, for one
39 Tailored with glamour
40 Ms. Lupino
41 Ms. Gardner
42 Episodes of mystery
43 Depend
46 Farmer's home, or
47 Ms. Ryan
48 Jungle beast

DOWN

1 Graduation
2 Ms. Lewis
3 Music teacher
4 Ocean waterbirds
5 Dance move
6 Ms. Hayek
7 Ms. Bergen
8 Ms. Lansbury
9 Ms. Rice
10 Ms. Kudrow
11 Ms. Bening
12 Ms. Bullock
13 Ms. Ryder
21 Ms. Hunter
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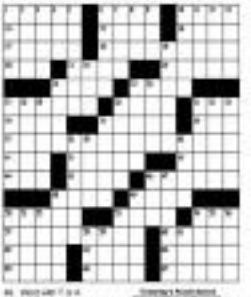

Designing Tibet

From page D1

building silhouettes and the architectural details. But window shapes, even the brightly colored furniture and wallpaper—all these were familiar to me because of Tintin.

We were exploring Dukezong, the heritage district of Zhongdian, a town that had once been an important outpost on the traditional trade routes between China and the Himalayan kingdoms. Our footwear as inside an old Muslim house, entering through a courtyard that was overgrown with weeds. The interior was quite like yet I could still make out magnificent murals depicting the various symbols associated with the Buddha.

Outside, the district was all abuzz with many balconied tourist establishments. One café-gallery we entered presented the same luxury feel of the antiquated home we saw. The wooden furnishings were lovingly preserved so that one could relish the time-worn textures which contrasted with the jolting colors of the throw pillows.

In our host's office we saw the same technique of interlocking traditional motifs into contemporary settings. The morning scene had a canopy and curtains festooned with the same sacred symbols we had seen in the residence. When I mentioned that the tranquility of the Dukezong made it the perfect place for conferences, our host explained that the downtown scheme was inspired by his advocacy to safeguard the interest of dissidents. For centuries, the solid stone spaces of Tibetan structures were shrine self-

contained by desperates...reminding the occupants of a nomadic past lived out in tents inside once habitable by blankets and carpets.

I would notice this same concern to marry the traditional with the contemporary in the Banyan Tree Resort in nearby Lijiang. The setting alone is already an embodiment of the region. One drives through sleepy villages and mountain valleys dominated by distant snow-bound summits. I was reminded that this is the land that the great botanist Joseph Rock had come to love during the years he spent here searching for plant specimens.

The area has some of the richest bio-diversity in the planet because of the various micro-climates created by the varying altitudes. For this reason, I even suggested that the resort could offer flower and herbs tasting expeditions where guests would go out into the surrounding countryside accompanied by experts to learn about the unusual flora. Rare endangered examples could then be cultivated and, after a demonstration by a dying workshop, transformed into scented herbal soaps.

Reviewing the Banyan Tree, I felt that I had simply wandered into another section of one of the village I had just visited. As one of the resort owners explained to me, they had dismantled abandoned wooden houses and recycled them on the site. It was actually more cost-effective to do this since buying fresh materials to erect an entirely new building would have been much more expensive. What gave the resort a sense of cohesion, though, was the fact that the homes had every item—from the stone floorings and wooden slabs to the pillows—

I was amused to spy about the grounds the huge sacks which the villagers would use to dry corn or peppers. An administrative office was even set up in a tent. I noted, too, that the entrance façade of the spa was exactly like that of the house in Dukezong, but it was located up a wide grassy hillside. Meanwhile, the guest cottages had poles that would have fit right into any storehouse in the region.

The bedroom once again featured balustrade fabrics juxtaposed with gnarled beams. Beautiful Qianlin-like paintings were everywhere adding a meditative ambience to the already soothing interiors. I noted interesting innovations such as dream seats as side tables and a huge wooden bucket fashioned into a soaking tub. I was happy to learn that the restaurant menu featured an adaptation of my favourite Tibetan dumplings whenever I find myself in a comforting mood.

What impressed me most though were the elements that spoke of a more spiritual dimension. The paths that connect the guest cottages are not smoothly paved but covered with large stones rounded from having spent an eternity at the bottom of rushing stone streams. Since it is not easy to walk on these uneven surfaces, one is initially puzzled: why had such an inconvenience been introduced? Then one realizes that these unusual paths allude to the deep spirituality of the Himalayan peoples.

All throughout Tibet, pilgrims come to erect sacred spots to pray and perform rituals. One remarkable practice is to circle a holy site while remaining completely prostrate. What makes this especially difficult is the roughness of the terrain which is filled with disconcerting rocks. There are also the great distances involved: sometimes after following a ritual circuit a pilgrim finds that in the case of Mt. Kailash, an entire mountain.

Interestingly, the whole Banyan Tree compound is dominated by a ridge on which the developers had built three chortens. These were eloquent indicators that though this area's a plush resort, it is also above modernity, an integral part of a mountainous land that had endured so much through the centuries.

Some may find the use of religious imagery in resorts inappropriate. There have been whole discussions on how tourism can commodify even what is sacred. For me, though, I am grateful for the reminder that travel is not just about pleasuring the body but also about nourishing the soul.

The writer would like to thank Adrienne Lim of Global Journal for recommending the Banyan Tree in Lijiang.

(CLOCKWISE, from top left) Front of the spa building of the Banyan Tree Lijiang. "Tibetan Landscape," by Nicholas Roerich, resembling parts of sights in the Old Town. An ink, "Tintin in Tibet" cover

LOOK BETTER, FEEL BETTER THIS *New Year!*

Having started with helping men and women work with quick, safe and effective way of losing their fats, Slendertone the global leader in muscle toning solutions has launched Slendertone Face, which as the name suggests, will help tone the facial muscles and it's clinically proven to restore the youthful shape of your face.

Slendertone Face stimulates the muscles beneath the surface of the skin and starts to tone it to combat sagging, which naturally occurs during the aging process. The results is a more natural "face lift" which is safe, risk and doesn't require you to undergo any surgeries. Slendertone is the only at home clinically proven device to stimulate the facial muscles.

How this happens is through the use of electromuscle stimulation (EMS) technology. It creates the bodies natural muscle movements, sending signals to the nerves that control muscle activity. In turn, it strengthens and increases muscle mass, helping restore the youthful shape and appearance of your face. Through Slendertone Face the foundations of the face are rebuilt, thus lifting and refining volume in the muscles that we use for facial expressions.

Already highly anticipated in the Philippine market, Slendertone Face will be available in the market next year but Slendertone Philippines has already been accepting orders through its Facebook fanpage.

Don't miss our chance to reveal a better, more confident you this coming New Year! Check out Slendertone Face and see what everyone has been raving about!

Slendertone Face is exclusively distributed by Prime Group of Companies. The product will be available in limited quantities. For orders and inquiries, send slendertonephilippines@primegc.com. Want your request demonstration of the product will be provided. For more information, visit www.slendertone.com or Slendertone Philippines Facebook fan page.

Scouring Singapore for hidden gems

One shopping destination under rosy Orchard Road even offers a discount for Pinoy shoppers

By Ruth L. Navarro

FINDING something new to do in Singapore is a daunting task. Yet, unrelenting seekers will find themselves rewarded with off-the-beaten-path discoveries.

If you plan to go there this Christmas season, make sure you make a beeline to the following places.

Ann Siang Hill

This really is a hill near Chinatown in the Outram Planning Area. It's fairly new entertaining locale in Singapore, and finding its location can prove to be a challenge. Make The Scarlet Hotel the landmark for this area.

That is one spot where you can stop back and take it slow. Most of the shops don't open until noon, and despite the area's quaintness and boutiques, the proprietors take their opening times seriously. Unless we, we tried knocking on their doors to let us in five minutes early!

That doesn't mean there's nothing to do when you get there early. You can walk on the street and soak in the architecture that dates back to the late 1800s.

When shops start to open, it's a question of where to go first. Asylum's edgy fashions is a hit with the 20-to-30 crowd. Angelene Tio, its brand manager, says most of the clothes and accessories they sell in the shop are flown in from Europe.

What caught our eyes was the shop at end of the street called The Little Dress Incse. The shop is a playground for grownups. You'll lose track of time while you sort through the knickknacks squeezed on the rabbit and the shelves lining the walls. Visitors should be warned that the customers based here would make you spend more than what you originally planned.

No worries, though, because we help mean will be made for the purchases! Usually, to assist how first made of Lego blocks; unique plastic pendants that local artists designed. Once that you gave up with Lunch: Rainbow Ralphs and Thru Mixers), rainy-pressing cards, and even loose Bisus.

When you're done shopping, you can stretch your legs out and sip some coffee in them.

Haji Lane

Haji Lane is a narrow street lined with eclectic shops that offer mixed martial arts gloves, furniture, trinkets and high fashion. Almost from independent designers. Numerous Mediterranean restaurants that offer different flavored drinks are found on its outskirts.

You can easily spot it from the Arab Street. The walls that lead to it are painted with loud, colorful graffiti. Like Ann Siang Hill, the buildings on Haji Lane are painted with bright colors of blue, red, and yellow. The shops are tented playfully like Vivid Orgasm, Inspace Boutique, and Stellar Happiness glass shop.

Again, make sure that you schedule your trip here well after lunchtime as most of the shops open late.

Ion Orchard

This building is hardly hidden, as it is one of the most popular malls on Orchard Road. One of its entry is directly connected to the MRT.

The gem in this building is found on its bowels. While the mall carries familiar high-end brands such as Louis Vuitton and Prada on its four levels above ground, it also has four levels of fast fashion shops below.

Just remember to wear comfortable shoes as you explore the mall. The Singapore Tourism Board also announced that the mall is offering a special discount for Filipino shoppers. They said that for every S$100 spent, you can get a rebate of S$20 from the mall. Just present the receipt and your passport at the concierge to avail of the promo until Dec. 31.

Hippo bus tour

Nothing screams "Tourists, ahoy!" than riding a double-decked bus on Orchard Road. But it is Christmas and the famed street is dressed with lights and décor.

The 30-minute Christmas bus ride starts from the Orchard Road to Marina Bay and back. There's something magical about having thousands of Christmas lights above your head and the refreshing evening wind in your face.

If you keep quiet and still, in a few minutes, you will actually have the birds singing to the trees. It also means you have to watch out for droppings. But even that would also bring good luck.

Brown Steakhouse

A trip to Singapore is never complete without a food trip. One should never miss the staple fare of kaya toast, Hainanese chicken, and chili crab.

Yet, this newly established establishment in the Marina Bay Financial Center just begs to be a part of that list. Their idea of steak deviates from the usual large chunk of meat, mashed potatoes, and gravy. Instead, they pair your cut with vegetables that will give you a balance of flavors.

While they do offer gravy they have other sauces on the menu, too: including blue cheese. The restaurant uses US Black Onyx Wood to grill the beef they import from Australia and other parts of the globe. Yes, however, set meals (S$30-S$40) per meal.

super LIFESTYLE

Super's Christmas wish: help for the victims of 'Sendong'

By Tatet Tiong
Contributor

EVERY little holiday catchup you've been complaining about (bad traffic, insane crowds, panic at the mall) has paled in comparison to the havoc that Tropical Storm "Sendong" wrought on Mindanao.

The loss of life, home and livelihood has been too much for the affected cities to bear, and it is Super's wish that our constant readers share some of your blessings to those in need.

A list of companies and organizations have been made it easy for us to give, and we've come up with a "do's" of the fastest way to send your gift across.

How to donate:

- **Philippine Daily Inquirer**
  Type of donation: Cash/goods
  Cash: BPI (Account Name: Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc., Account Number: 4861-0007-96)
  Goods: Drop donations to Philippine Daily Inquirer offices, 5000 Chino Roces Ave., corner Yague & Elizalde Streets, Makati; please look for Blanca Gamboa or Connie Calayagan.
- **Globe and Smart** offer subscribers an easy way to donate via SMS to the Philippine Red Cross.
  Simply text RED <space> AMOUNT to 2899 for Globe or 4162 for Smart. Text (amount) or denominations of P10, 20, 100, 200, 500 or 1,000. (Takes less than five minutes to do this).
- **Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro**
  Cash: BPI, Account name: XAVIER UNIVERSITY, Account number: 9331-0133-00 (Cagayan de Oro, Divisoria Branch).
  Goods: Drop off goods at the Xavier University Gateway in Corrales Avenue (CDO), San Jose. Volunteers are also welcome to help sort out donations and request them for transport.
  For more info, check out Xavier University's "The Crusader Publication's" Facebook page (http://facebook.com/thecrusaderpublication).
- **LBC**
  Goods: LBC will deliver donated goods for free to affected cities and provinces. Donations are accepted at any LBC branch nationwide. For inquiries, call the LBC hotline at (632) 8889888.
- **Angel Brigade**
  Cash: PNBC, Account Name: ROMEL D'Foundations, Account Number: 459-1677-979.
- **Endevor**
  Goods: Endevor accepts bottled water, ready-to-eat food items, clothes and medicine. Drop off your donations at Endevor Colleges, McKinley Hill, Taguig.
- **Rush Fil's potable water fund**
  Cash: BPI Loyola Heights, Account Name: Rush Fil Philippines, Account Number: 3099-0019-44

What to donate:

Unsure of what is needed most? Check out this list:

Food – Donate food that requires minimal preparation, does not spoil easily, and is easy to transport. Mix-and-flavored canned goods, and biscuits.

Bottled water – They are in need of clean, potable water.

Clean clothes – While they appreciate your efforts to send over clothes, be practical and select stuff like shirts, pants, shorts—basic, casual clothes. Skip the frilly skirts and beaded dresses. **Footwear**: Flat slippers and rubber shoes are also welcome, as well as clean socks and underwear.

Medicine – Pain relievers (both for adult and child use), and medical supplies like bandages and gauze are also needed.

Blankets – Lightweight blankets, towels, and mats are also welcome.

Graphics Design: Ruben Joshua Cadiz

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

Magical solace at Marriott

FEELING festive and fancy? Head to Marriott Manila for only P9,888 net, inclusive of breakfast for two at Marriott Café and P&B credits worth P1,000, the whole family is in for the most splendid holiday treat.

The holiday rush is winding down this period when everyone's done with Christmas shopping, countless parties now, wanting to enjoy the remaining long breaks. Why not once again head to Marriott Café for a lavish buffet dinner at P2,800 net per head and savour the New Year with the most lavish holiday grubs and booze.

Throw in a memorable venue for the whole clan and let everyone swoop down to the wide variety of Asian and Western delicacies. But if it's something more quaint and classy, Cru Steakhouse is no doubt the venue to call. At P4,500 net per head, add glam to the experience with Cru Steakhouse's specialties, exclusively prepared for the occasion.

Manila Pavilion sets up for a Christmas winter fantasy adventure

MANILA Pavilion Hotel takes you to a Christmas winter fantasy this magical season of joy. As the lobby stands an igloo so delicious with its own pastry counter perfect of it! Add build your marriage for the best surprise. The igloo actually houses a batch of Christmas goodies you can purchase as gifts for family and friends or even for yourself such as igloo to-talk chocolate-tarsilas, pastries, and Christmas hampers. As the cheerful Santa Mr. no welcomes and bids you goodbye from the igloo, be jolly characters greet you as you walk along. Say hello to cute giant moving teddy bears with one entering and the other popping out from a gift box! Meanwhile, keeping it cool of the summer in the nights, remember what's from real ice. Walking for the fi-lings you to be breathtaky to Christmas trees at the center of the lobby. To keep you from leaving lost in the wonderful world of fantasy. The hotel has created sweet and wacky storefront signages that are enticingly yummy located within view to point you to exciting restaurants of Seasons, Patisserie, and Brother. Manila Pavilion Hotel is located at United National Avenue corner Maria Orosa Street. Ermita, Manila. For inquiries and reservations, dial +632-10-MANILA (6245262) or visit www.manilapavilion.com.ph/waldorf-hotel-manila-pavilion-hotel-casino. Manila Pavilion Hotel is part of the Waldorf-Hotels Group of Hotels and Casinos in the Philippines, considered as the largest, 100-percent Filipino-owned and operated hotel chain in the country. Visit www.waldorfhotels.com.ph for details.

'Tis the season at Midas Hotel

DO SOMETHING fabulously different this year. Make it at Midas Hotel & Casino. Eat, drink and have fun for 'tis the season to be merry. Stay in a de luxe room for only P6,000 net and enjoy buffet breakfast for two, complimentary token in Star City or Splash Island. Your stay can also be converted to a gift certificate which makes a perfect gift for your loved ones and friends. Steakhouse opt for a gift certificate. This will be valid until Jan. 15, 2012. Terms and conditions apply. Midas Hotel & Casino is proudly managed by Genesis Hotels & Resorts. For inquiries and reservations, please call 982-3100 or to learn more about our hotel visit midashotelandcasino.com and genesishotels.com.

Eastwood Richmonde's holiday elegance

THE EASTWOOD Richmonde Hotel invites you to experience a holiday filled with extravagance and excitement. Make your Christmas with loved ones truly memorable with festivities set within the hotel's plush settings while enjoying an array of lavish Yuletide offerings. Choose from among the three packages available only this season. First is the Holiday Bonanza Room Packages which are valid from Dec. 15 to Jan. 8, except Dec. 31, with rates starting at P4,788 net for a Superior Room and includes relaxing accommodations and a hearty buffet breakfast for two adults and two children 5 years old and below. For a hassle-free yet fabulous Christmas celebration, the Christmas Eve Room Packages, valid on December 24, provide bold-faced comforts of a well-appointed guest room, splendid Christmas Eve dinner and Christmas Day breakfast buffets at the Richmonde Café for two adults and two children 5 years old and below, for all for as low as P6,840 net. All packages include complimentary use of the Fitness Center facilities and the rooftop pool. For inquiries and reservations, you may call (632) 570-7777, send an e-mail to reservations@eastwood.com.ph, or log on to www.richmondehotel.com. Eastwood Richmonde Hotel is located at 17 Orchard Road, Eastwood City, Bagumbayan, Quezon City 1110, Philippines (beside Eastwood Mall). Access from the malls is at the 2nd level.

Cinnabon introduces best cupcakes

AFTER over 20 years of making the world's best cinnamon roll, Cinnabon is kicking the next 20 years and beyond by introducing the world's best cupcakes. Available at SM Mall of Asia, SM North Edsa, The Block, Glorietta, Ayala Malls, The Shops Greenbelt, The Podium, Galleria, San Pedro, Sta. Rosa, Silangan, Molino, Bacoor, Dasmariñas, Cabanatuan, Tarlac, Lucena, Naga, Iloilo, Bacolod, Cebu, Tagbilaran, Tacloban, Davao, Gaisano Mall of Davao, Gaisano Mall of Cagayan de Oro, Gaisano Mall of Iligan, Gaisano Mall of General Santos, Limketkai Mall of Cagayan de Oro, Abreeza Mall of Davao, Ayala Malls Vertis North, Ayala Malls Manila Bay, Ayala Malls Feliz, Ayala Malls Circuit, Ayala Malls Capitol Central, Ayala Malls Marquee, Ayala Malls Solenad, Ayala Malls Harbor Point, Ayala Malls Legazpi, Ayala Malls Central Bloc

Luxurious holiday getaway at Crimson Resort and Spa Mactan

TREAT your family to a luxurious holiday getaway at Crimson Resort and Spa Mactan. For a minimum of two nights, indulge in our ultimate villa package for only P16,250 net per night and enjoy Crimson's exclusive facilities and amenities. Applicable for two adults and two kids below 5 years old, the package includes buffet breakfast and dinner for two, unlimited 24-hour buffet breakfast and dinner, round trip airport transfers, and unlimited massage at the Asian Spa for two adults. On Dec. 25, seven-year-gated Sadia and enjoy an exciting afternoon of fun, food and surprises at the Chocolate Kids Christmas Party. Have meal na sa Sulit or cook for a Christmas Eve dinner. Have coconut fried with sweet corn and enjoy a scrumptious holiday feast for only P1,800 net per person. On Christmas day, beat the cravings of mood ones over a delicious spread of Christmas dishes. The Manila Bay lunch buffet for only P1,800 net per person and Christmas Day dinner buffet for only P1,600 net per person. Rates are valid until Jan. 31, 2012. Rates and inclusions are subject to hotel terms & conditions. For inquiries and reservations call 238-0008, (0920) 853-9888, or log onto www.crimsonresort.com.ph.

Celebrate the joys of Christmas with family at The Malayan Plaza Hotel

IT'S THAT TIME of the year again where spending quality time with family and loved ones is the best gift you can give and receive. The staff at Malayan Plaza Hotel value love and togetherness this season, and therefore have created this neat little package that ties in everything you want for a functional Christmas vacation. Celebrate the holidays at Malayan Plaza Hotel's coolness and take advantage of this season's discounted room rates. For only P5,500 net, enjoy a relaxing overnight stay in our Studio Suite Inn. P5,788 net in a Studio Twin Deluxe, and P6,188 net in a One Bedroom Deluxe. All accommodations include free buffet breakfast for two. Located in Ortigas Center, the Malayan Plaza Hotel is right in the middle of shopping malls, party venues, activity centers and fine dining restaurants, making it all the more the perfect spot to come to this holiday rush. To make it even sweeter, you also get two free ride-all-you-can tickets at Star City, ideal for couples and for families with young kids. For reservations, please call The Malayan Plaza at (632) 736-8000 or e-mail malayanplaza@quantumskyline.com. You may also visit www.themalayanplaza.blogspot.com.ph.

One-derful Tagaytay Place Hotel treats

THIS YEAR, the Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites offers something one-derful. Get Tagaytay Place's Pudong Piece of fun: an overnight stay in palatial room for two at P5,888 net on Dec. 25. Package includes a memorable area for two to be served at 2 p.m. in the hotel's Chinese restaurant, Pudong, where more fun and Christmas merry-making abounds. Another delectable spot, the Children's Joy Foundation Rock Star sponsorship foundations will join from their cheerful. Christmas carols from Dec. 23 to 24. For guests who opt for a One Bedroom Suite, upgrade is at P1,000 net. Extra person is at P1,200 nett all meals included. And for guests with their kids tagging along, they will pay no extra charge if their kids are below 12 years old and a maximum of two. This offer is not just for guests checking in. It's also open to walk-in guests. On-times dinner is at P688 net per person. Monsod's Geisa is at P399 net per person, and Christmas day dinner buffet is at P777 net. Rate concepts a 10-percent holiday discount as well. Apart from a very fourth evening party more treat for the Children's Joy Foundation. Drop us the night of December 23 to 24. One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites will be giving away O'Sparg's ice-cream cakes, Bose headset, and an overnight stay at Midas Hotel to the lucky winners of their Christmas rewards. Call one of these numbers: 581-8041, 497-4813, 477-7111, (0906) 483-0111, (0922) 534-6972, (0922) 534-6974 or 70 or visit www.onedaytagaytayplace.com or facebook.com/onedaytagaytayplace.wordpress.com/onedaytag-day.

Christmas Wonderland experience at Movenpick Cebu

FOR A CHRISTMAS unlike anywhere else, Movenpick Resort & Spa Cebu invites everyone to Bella Bella Christmas goodies from Bee Gerpresel House of Deli, holiday to pamper and Dream of Vanilla Beach Café and the Beer Fest's Live duo with the Forbes de Mezer. Movenpick's Resort & Spa Cebu serves the right set night for The Latinaires. Movenpick Cebu celebrated their first Christmas Tree Lighting did Dec. 7 by bringing back our childhood memories of fairies and magic. The lobby was adorned with a red and white decorations, complete with a big Santa Claus standing by the

entrance to greet the guests. The Movenpick Singing Ambassadors chilled the festive atmosphere, singing Christmas songs in angelic voices. The Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony was officially opened by General Manager Klaus Kastenholz, handed the gold box to his nine Regional Sales Managers, Jeanne Dee. To officially light the white Christmas tree, a gold fairy gradually descended from the ceiling to mark the gigantic event to the tree. Then, to mindful of extraordinary and sugar plum dreamscape. This year, Movenpick's Resort & Spa Cebu gives a wonderful Christmas gift to the form of Angela Ko, Motel for Family Foundation. Guests can also attend Ko stores to receive ornaments from the Charity Tree. All proceeds are for the benefit of the foundation. For inquiries and reservations, please contact 492-7777.

Gran Prix
Microtel
Hotels · Resorts

'Larong kalye'

Mara Coson

DIDS, that's what I am called because of Filmmakers previewed, though I've never discovered my height but followed characters and a Santa Claus-era-corrupted to a midget. I think it the name but for looks I'm meant to turn around. "How a it?" People stand by. I think a look at the video through the camera. The steps are used to be brought back audio-mouth the texts because the cute closets are right above us. The signs had already gotten a little bit rare from the last achievement of cast. What was being planned back to me all came from a MMFF piece of paper to me, models, of dotted lines, stick figures and loose lining.

I think it's good, and we've done. "Call it a wrap then." My friend, who today is a director of photography, prods. I'm only "Sey it."

"Didn't it shine? I look up to say and we cheer without knowing what we're celebrating. Playtime was over, and we were all weary, rained on, bending knees big-sanded with that gooey sand people bring home from a festival. Our props included borrowed instruments, a set-threaded cabinet, a black cape and guns on our hands. At times we felt part of a motivating speech to rookies with sights, as described music considering the uneven stars of a sending event, like Emilio Jimenez in "The Mighty Ducks" or Ely Buendia in "The Tuxedo." Anyone who endured my video for the MMFF should wonder with an exaggerated shrug.

You could say I made this one-take music video for the New Year's Day episode of my taboo pastoral God child, "The Gems Rogue," on comedy sister-mental college where Quintessential employees in pastel suits a certain mop uniform that only exists because I paid a lot of effort into it—or at least I've told. But that doesn't explain why the power and doesn't have much of a purpose.

Pitching to present-centred blog harpers does a thin clip month-up. I bet it still on the one song that was dressed nicely just for me the Gem Rogue—a song that I fantasized the rock we used to be endlessly-certified by childhood memories—playing with friend-friends from our backs, re-working our knees over gravel, and when's the only politics are needed to know about was in a game of rope and rubber.

"Pa-pa pa-ra-ra-ra, Patintero, sa tapat ng kalsada ang-o-Goyo magsiliban," more sing Bambong Shirley's "Patintero/Hahulan Luneng Kalye". Ang Bandang Shirley—named after a supply dismissive to an Eraserheads song who consecutively falls in bah-leh-leh-leh-leh"—is a band well-known for its traditionally feel-good conditions of childlike memories. Wang sana, sabihan nga dana ng mga batang nagpraktis na kahit low at maiyong ding "Patintero" (Only three songs in 2008, and get less and the 7:30 songwriting camp. I think that's the thing that sets it apart—you'll get an abstract love idea and you have memories of playing all these games in a list, and the word-of-mouth between both feelings make it easy to remember the melody."

The other vocalist Jobina, who I used to think was Shirley, joined the band because of the song. "I especially love the part that goes 'Kaa-kang nya-hang ng Amerikano sa batuhan-tal," she explains. "That's exactly how I used to experience love, and all the years I was single it was like a mantra (hahaha, cheesy) as a counselor that telling in love should always be cautious and forthright, expressive, as usual games. You know when you're in it."

Standing over old branch-pencil bedsheets, the band begins to play the opening riff of Eraserheads's "Maka-layo Layang Kalye." We direct while the riff knocks the adult out of us.

"We clearly look like they were up per on faulty feet they can't?" I yell out at the day laughing. I was practicing myself, we were contained by rules inside, and we were all in the same boat, and an offering of eggs to the Dimensions to Gerun Gera.

"You have to let eggs to a shack in Kalayaan. Our egg for every three hours," said my cousin Indonesian. So when the same came around over the weekend, I could only cling to the promise of those eggs.

And it did rain, in between rides, but when it stopped it brought us a rainbow light. If only you could stretch out to see the entire sky, you would see that we filmed our second take beneath a rainbow. At the 3rd pail, we all lay down on the grass around the band, both drenched and exhausted, while the stage inside the ground broke—singing along with the vocalists. "Ih pa ga si si si si", we all sing along with the voices, after childs dueying in an effort to bring back our childhood. I can't help but feel synchronized.

"To say a work of art is continuated is perhaps to dismiss it," says music critic Cad Wilson. "It is not enough to be technical, phony, exaggerated, manipulative, self-indulgent, hypocritical, dumpy, and clichéd."

It may well be the case, but promoting such commentary is fighting in the dollar. Issues become jurisdictionally pessimistic if you're single, and if you're single Monday-spell, then I tattles my whole body in the mud of pastiche in the world of online marketing campaigns and the because of genuine intent because by half-sensed failure and sometimes, audience reception means no matter. Any way, I'm sure what you felt about a song is not enough to be loved anyway.

Loudly appreciate how everyone who turned up at did it for nothing. It is one of the saints, the children in awe of the strength of a fun made with solo costumes, that the shoot was memorable. Not to mention that we all shared a lunch everything. Besides, "not knowing" is the best part about childhood.

The video comes out New Year's Day at thegrimpact.wordpress.com.

Tours, Leisure & Chow

New Paskong Pinoy dolls at Dencio's

DENCIO'S, the western resto bar and grill restaurant chain in the country, makes the Yuletide season more exciting with two dishes that will introduce a tasty Christmas cheer to everyone's dining experience. Tell Kris Aquino these dishes are her favorite with their Boneless Bonanchon. Drench your fare with the scrumptious taste of breaded boneless fish strips in sweet and tangy ginger sauce with a blessed sa-rap-ay and bell peppers, perfect for those who love the scrumptious combination of spice and tart in their tongue. Or you can opt for their signature Kalamansi Hummusbing Khaos! This sweet pineapple glazed chicken served in a sizzling plate will undeniably delight lovers with its crispy skin and tender white meat flavor the consistencies and creaminess and relish the color of celebrations with this delightful dish. Enjoy these delectable offerings with your loved ones and friends in a set meal good for four people for only P1,200, enjoy Boneless Bonanchon, along with three bowls Dencio's Shrimp Bisque, 50% off on their refreshing drinks from Homecooking

Editor Nestor U. Torre • Assistant Editor Rina P. Jimlo

SATURDAY Special

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NOW SHOWING

Auspicious start for MMFF 2011

WOOD AND ROCKS: Tagalik Abe's crime drama.

By Rina P. Jimlo

THEIR HONEYBUNS may have been limited, but the entries to the indie division (full-length features and student shorts) of this year's Metro Manila Film Festival are a satisfying mix of thematically significant dramas, darkly whimsical comedies and character studies. And, while they aren't as well-realized as the films of Cinemalaya, it's instructive to note that they're better-crafted than the head-scratchers of Cinema One's recent edition. A sad exception: Brillante Mendoza's "Ma' Rosa," which is not in competition.

Take Adolf Alix Jr.'s "Harue" and Lee Meiji Jones Blancot and Dolores Cigaliti's "Operation." They aren't without flaws, but they go beyond the dazzling quirkiness, retooled storytelling and self-indulgence that characterize many indies these days.

"Harue (Instagiban Mix)" follows the curious tale of Tadano Hisashi (aka Haruo Hanley Mori), a Japanese expat who decides to live in Manila after getting reinvigorated on Tokyo's mixed cruise.

Street food

At his settles into a poor neighborhood, he makes ends meet by peddling street food. But, his life takes another exciting turn when he meets mysterious drama Zelda Michelle (the luminous Rosanne Rosales), who looks like she could cast Hisashi's penchant for seeing lovely damsels in distress.

There are some nice chat word-tying up, but Alfred Benjamin's crisp photography and Alix's oddly relatable characters bring the film's cautionary tale to pulsating life.

Rosales is a breath of fresh air, while Mon steals up his lonely character in Ellen Ramos and Paolo Villaluna's riveting 2009 drama, "Walang Hanggang Paalam." In Pino's glib-talking candidate (who has his own problems in health), Fonseca floats in an anchor of cool comfortability.

We wouldn't be surprised if Adolf replicates his first indie Film triumph last year. (In the ensemble piece, "Pinoy") with his 1905 feature film since 2005's "Donsol"—from parallels can you get? He uses his next film is a drama set in Kalayaan island in the southwestern Spratlys.

The scope is bigger and more ambitious in "Thirdeye"—it fuses fine action, animation, music and dance as it examines the desperate lives of informal settlers and scavengers in Isla Puti, a garbage dumpsite.

DE GUZMAN: His scenes have fine action, animation, music and dance.

Dynamics

More than the poverty it depicts, however, the film invest in on the lively dynamics among its parent-children, individuals and juvenile delinquent protagonists, portrayed by a rowdy JM de Guzman, Julia Victoria Sicat, Boots Anson-Roa, and Mimi Gonzales, as they crawl their way up from the bottom of the food chain.

The animation is impressive, but it sometimes distracts from the story, which the filmmakers and first actors handle with insight and thoughtful flourish. Some scenes have an unfinished feel to them, but it's easy to follow the story as it spins around the lives of people who know better than to do what's right!

We also commend the festival's attention to technical proficiency, because many indie divers in commercial cinema are starting to slide aspect. It also sets points for getting students to start young in filmmaking—the shots are unpolished and rough around the edges, but they demonstrate the youth's grit and dramatic potential.

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4 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – GHOST PROTOCOL in 3D
5 WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
6 REDBELT

TACLOBAN
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2 NEW YEAR'S EVE / MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
3 WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
4 THE LION KING in Digital 3D
5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – GHOST PROTOCOL

ILOCOS NORTE
1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – GHOST PROTOCOL
2 WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
3 ANNAPOLIS

DUMAGUETE
1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – GHOST PROTOCOL
2 NEW YEAR'S EVE / MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
3 WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
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5 WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
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GENSAN
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3 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – GHOST PROTOCOL
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ANGELES
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2 WON'T LAST A DAY WITHOUT YOU
3 ANNAPOLIS
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The Perfect Venue

Winners and losers on the tube

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST WEEK, television's news eliminated by weeded to co- leveraged by scenes and [illegible] programming at its best—and worst. Here, the winners:

On "Bakya" last Monday, a revenge sequence capped a melodrama-depleting the title character's unending wretched development inside hospital ans of crossing paths unrelated lies, regret, to come up with an eloquently inspirational rebuttal.

Montagna aren't easy to pull off, because they're all about subjective correlations and subtle interventions, but she manages me nevertheless and delightfully underlining my "Bakya" won- ringaling's effective.

On the concluding series, "Bato Ay Bato Ding," some engaging peeks inside are coming into their own. The young actress who plays a politician's aunt and [illegible] as Romana's sister supersizes eats her lack of the usual melodramatic frustration. She plays her role with directness and focused feeling, and looks like she has a bright future ahead of her—if she sticks to her therapist's pants and doesn't go the way of all flash and flourish, like many of her young contemporaries.

Beads Wallen is also starting to make good and sometimes some of his character in the youth who holds the key to the identity and whereabouts of Bangkit but we, PR, hope that he finally breaks through in the series' concluding episodes.

On "Ikokak," Sarah Lahbati is similarly coming across strongly and sometimes true to it. Ha-oh, despite the chameleonly "over" or dull-as- dishwater portrayals of the actress around her.

Bess, for the role they [illegible] being a gifted actress Bhuh Gil is unable to make his character in "Bato Ay Bato Ding" come across as an integral and organic way.

What comes to be the problem? One hopeful is that the "villains" side is that character is being overworked and done to death, to fill the show's melodramatic needs in unreasonably [illegible] and ridiculous ways.

The series has certainly heaped most of its villainy and evil on Ishak's character's head, so for each [illegible] Kenneth announces to be underestimated- able and believable.

Wear and tear

As a result, the otherwise viewable and improving show is also betraying signs of wear and tear that is what is called in the [illegible] trade as "unnecessary and superficial ruling action," as the story is hurriedly [illegible] to its resolution. Too many new characters and subplots are making it difficult to closely and [illegible] straight second to the thematic and dramatic conditions.

At this late stage, viewers don't need to have to contend with and "process" new characters and complications, they need to focus on the basic storyline as it reaches its climax to a hopefully [illegible] and meaningful one.

The series' third characters are also running off [illegible] they're [illegible] as they're made to [illegible] dialogue that's too "knowing" and "wise" for kids to naturally [illegible].

This is particularly a problem for Jerrel Dhondini, who first bore [illegible] and "old" in [illegible] one after another—"100 Days to Heaven" and now, "Bato." Give the poor girl a break, already! Let her be act and talk like the kid she is, why don't you?

Finally, it's becoming [illegible] of the series' four young leads, it's Zaijian Jaranilla who [illegible] his biggest [illegible] to [illegible] and [illegible] with [illegible] to [illegible] poor [illegible]. He's a sensitive young actor, but he sometimes [illegible] all [illegible]—a problem for his young [illegible] don't have.

LAHBATI (LEFT) AND AVELINO: Cases across triangle and emotively.

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Celebs add lambent glow to Christmas

By Nestor U. Torre

CHRISTMAS LIGHTERS evoke a warm feeling this season, with their lambent glow that promises hope, love and joy and all things bright and blessed!

It's also a time to celebrate the people who mean the most to us. In entertainment, media and the arts, some celebrities have made a glowing difference in the viewing public's lives, because they've gone beyond mere diversion to do work that has left an effect on our love, laughter and lives. We see special thanks to them.....cue Christmas Stars:

Boots Aguas-Ruiz—the workaholic/nightlife scene maven/Mom/Dad head, making life funny for hundreds of film workers fallen on hard times.

Host post-Thoy-ly double for Commission officials, Leander Guillen and Bobby Tan, for making sure that the information pipeline discovery genuinely gifted filmmakers and evening movies that will impinge on viewers' lives.

Against all odds, Robert Seña and Lucy Abarum put up the Spotlight Artists Center to discover and train dozens TV/film artists for film and the next generations.

National Artist Edilberto Kiamco—thanks for proving that creativity is truly ageless!

In this regard, we also express our admiration for unsung, or "underlearning" octogenarians," Eddie Garcia, for still being an active presence in our TV/film screens. And we may just add Ate Ji Smith (Inez) Eddie in the big "legal action denial" that we've been pushing them to close for years now, because we believe that only Eddie can do full justice to the plum role.

Another octogenarian we'd like to thank is the famous vocal artist, Annabelle "Chesley" Oreta. For making her art feel like—and live—twice.

To say that Chesley is a constant and thrilling inspiration is to gild her with Swarovski crystals with others only diamonds will do—but we hope you get the point.

Partnership

Still in the visual arts, we thank ghost sculptor, Benjamin Orillana, and his wife, Lap-Ang, for their creative and prolific partnership.

For "Travel Time" honorees, Ariane Medina, more television and magazine issues to make Filipinos realize that domestic travel isn't just otherwise!

QUILLEN. Exposure movies that make a difference.

ROM. Wrote indefatigably as Marvelland head.

Internet hope that Debra Carreiras will finally write and publish her ultra-revealing and "colorful" autobiography in 2012. ....The only hitch is, let's lived can be a colorful and eventful life than it'll have to be a 20-book confection!

EXCITING panorama of destinations for discriminating travelers.

'Welcome to my world'

Gozales, Dra. Serafica, with Father Ernie Tagudin.

On April 14, Journeys in the Land of the Bible purposefully visits Jordan, Israel and Egypt, with an Israeli tour leader, Bishop Brad Hirschfield, Father Jeff Quindoy and Father Dan Lim.

From April 8 to 16, Journeys' Monte and Sabey Egypt tour includes a Nile Cruise to Luxor, Aswan and Abou Simbel.

And, on April 30, the Alhering Adventures group will visit the cultural, scenic and religious Davao of Madrid, Toledo, Seville, Cordoba and Granada.

Why do Journeys of Faith's pilgrims have the "faith and fun" group better than to come? It helps that Journeys is a subsidiary of Alhering Travel, one of the country's most experienced travel companies.

Journeys of Faith's Fr. Jeff Quindoy, Fr. Dan Lim, Bishop Brad Hirschfield, Fr. Ernie Tagudin and Fr. Dra. Serafica Gozales

YULETIDE STORY FOR YOUNG READERS

What now, carabao?

By Nestad Tarre

CARABAOS ARE calm, practical creatures. They don't like getting excited or hysterical because, well, it would just take up too much energy! And we all know that the hardworking carabao needs all the energy it can get.

Not even the most serene carabao, however—which was what Rosalinda was—can remain a peaceful surface when confronted with the fact that their very existence might soon be coming to an end!

It all began on the day they delivered the news: it was high noon and Rosalinda, after plowing through most of the morning, was having a nice, cool shaded in her favorite mudhole, she could hear mysterious rumbling noises and the shrill, excited voices of her master and his family in the distance, but it's hard to fuss a carabao when she's deep in her mudhole, so she just let it flow like muddy water over her broad back. The unusual squawking of her hired friend Subu was harder to ignore, however.

"Hay, wake up, wake up!" he chirped, hopping from one end of her back to the other, madly flapping his white wings. "I have just seen something horrible!"

"What?" Rosalinda yawned. Really, she didn't know why he would work himself into such a state when it was so hot!

"There is a new tractor in your master's house!" And Subu fluttered to rest on her back and waited. Upon hear that is takes a carabao a while to think some things through.

—A tractor, Rosalinda was thinking...now, what is that again? Oh, yes, that noisy machine that the farmer uses domestic. The one he uses to plow the fields and haul things with, instead of using carabaos. —Instead of a carabao? Oh, dear!

Later, as she and her master were plowing the field, Rosalinda was so preoccupied with thoughts of being replaced by the tractor that she kept turning the wrong way, and the farmer had to pull on his hand and her leash to get her several times.

"Ah, well," he said as he was unhitching her from the plow, "now that I have a new tractor, I won't have to yell at you anymore, eh?"

Little did he know how he had terrified poor Rosalinda, who got more and more frightened as the days went by! She was no longer hitched to the plow or cart and, what was worse, the farmer's children would take her out in the choicest grazing spots much more often than they used to before. Oh, dear, oh, dear, she thought, they are fattening me up! I am going to be slaughtered!

"Carabao!," Subu agreed with a sad shake of his head. And he picked insects off her body in sympathy.

As Rosalinda left herself getting heavier and heavier, it wasn't her own bulk that made her pouch deeper into the ground with each step, but the weight of her dread. She woke up one cool morning resolved to do something...but, before she could make any plans, one more new master and his child drove and they trained: washing her with soap and water until her hide fairly gleamed.

Well, that was a bit strange, she thought, as they proceeded to bring out the wooden cart....

Before they could hitch her to it, however, Subu landed on her back in a flurry of wings. "Quick!" he screeched. "Stop running! He's going to take you to the slaughterhouse! Run or you'll be carabeef!"

Now, carabaos don't panic that quickly, but they can when they must, and so it was that the residents of the small town of La Paz were treated to the early morning spectacle of a floating carabao with a bewildered farmer and his brood of children running after it!

Rosalinda, in her panic, charged right into the nearest plants, went toward and toward the mountain and, finally, feeling the heat of the midmorning sun, drank from it. ...There, she voted to get into it and it was at this point that the owner's residence finally caught up with her.

"Tamaso!," the master called to her master. "Why is your carabao crying to get into the fountain?"

By this time, Rosalinda was realizing several things: One, that she couldn't fit into the fountain; two, that all the people around her were finding something incredibly funny, and, three, that she didn't know what she was going to do!

—Unbeknownst to Rosalinda, who by then had been hammered and was being pulled away from the fountain by a group of laughing men, it was the day before Christmas and she had been selected to be one of the animals for the town's first attempt at a living nativity scene!

This she realized later on, when they made her stand on some boards at a spotted area, several goats, and the master's horse. The latter horse all obtain is and explained, rather condescendingly, the reason why the people in front of them were dressed in long robes and veils and had golden circles on their heads.

And, if you're worried about Rosalinda's future, don't be—her master wasn't listening her up because she had an appointment at the abbatoir, but because she was going to help start off the new season....carabao milk!

ONGLAO: The world's her apple!

'Welcome to my world!'—Arlina

HUGGINS AND Globetrotters are getting up for an exciting 2012, a memorable year of travel and cultural immersion to Journeys of Faith's unique destinations, as personally experienced and directed by resident pilgrimage and tour master, Arlina Ongkiko.

The excitement starts in February, with journeys to the Land of the Bible....Amman and Petra in Jordan, and Jericho, Nazareth, Cana, Capharnaum, Philippi, Tiberias, Mt. Tabor, Haifa, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Bethlehem and Jerusalem in Israel—plus Sinai and Cairo in Egypt. Pilgrims will be traveling with no less than Archbishop Dibadoc Quevedo.

For a truly exotic change of pace, journeys of faith also goes on an Incredible India adventure on Feb. 12-29—and then Bora-Bora to New Zealand, one of the most dramatically beautiful places on the planet, on Feb. 21....Arlina's "rest and pilgrimage company that could" is definitely going places!

Awesome

...Make that all over the planet, because in March, Journeys soars all the way to South America—Chile, Peru, Brazil, Argentina—truly awesome!

From March 31 to April 13, Journeys returns to the Holy Land, this time with the tangible Fil Father Rolando Jose Lapuz, SJL, as chaplain.

On April 9, Journeys reverses to wings further and heads for Holy and Mystical Europe, traversing through impressive religious sites in Italy (including the Eternal City of Rome, where St. Padre Pio lived and died), and France (like on Provence, Lourdes, Paris).

THE TOUR and pilgrimage moves abroad with Christ and Benin Arcon-Rea (left) and Tierra and Julius Rabun.

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SATURDAY Special

SANTOS, RAMSEY, ROSALES, PINTO AND BADIAS: Deeper significance

Stars recall their most unforgettable Yuletide memories

By Rito P. Asilo

CHRISTMAS IS always the best time to take stock of years of trials and triumphs—even for celebrities.

For Vilma Santos, the holiday season represents hope and renewal—but, she says, it took on a deeper significance when she became a mother.

She recalls, "When I gave birth to Luchy, naghiyap ang pamunas ko sa Pasko—lying-in ng isip niche-news at pamchi-ing regels, because you don't think about yourself anymore!"

Another unforgettable Christmas for the Star for All Seasons was when her beloved father, Amado, passed away in 1984, shortly after her birthday (Nov. 3), the season. "It was my loneliest Christmas, kasi parang ito 'yan. When Mama was living, with my sisters in the States, he stayed with me here—ako ang nagpapa-xa silbe ko sa 'Vilma.'

"Ni his wake, I was in ceremonial with grief that people had to literally drag me to see him in his coffin. Mamulupyod talaga ako, kasi spoke crying, muttering ge-nee—parang ekawa sa pelikula!"

In the right direction

For her part, Jaya says she has a lot to be grateful for: "God has been winning my life for me, and steering me in the right direction—this is all His and Mama Mary's doing, and I just follow where They lead me!"

The singer recalls her difficult years in the States with her mom, comedienne Elizabeth Ramsey. She shares, "Nakiyap Pasko. Isa ako didn't have any money. One time, my mom had a wild dream while we were sleeping in the cold. We used to smoke as she played solitaire in front of the TV.

"Then, we both dozed off—tapos, bigla siyang gumising and said, 'Ay, sa ginaw ang, 10 pa!Ang mucho (you wouldn't believe it)—gave nakita him on TV as pangalap ko. Ito makunta ko Pelli Arts Theater!' I protested, 'Ma, paano tayo makakaalis, e ang taba-taba ko pa!' —A few years later, Jaya did come home to perform—at the Pelli Arts Theater!

Sharing

For "Kumare Klub's" Ilonita Brenda Ilabaa, Christmas is about sharing: "God shared His Son with us—so, I also share my love with people who matter to me!"

TV5's new recruit says she has had many unforgettable Christmases: "When I was a little girl, I couldn't wait to open the gifts under the Christmas tree at midnight! I also can't forget the time when Adrian (Bobas, her husband) and I went to Europe for the holidays. It was really nakik...and a bit sad. Jaya pa! I'm talaga ang Pasko sa Pinas! So, on Christmas day itself, we made sure we were back in Manila—home, sweet home!"

Like Vilma and Jaya, another local star brought more meaning to Tonyo's Christmases: "I was overflowing with joy when I gave birth to Atasia in 2005 and Antonio last year," she exclaims.

The lovely Sam Pinto recalls the excitement and frenzy that came with Christmas when she was a kid: "We used to celebrate Christmas in Baguio, where my mom comes from. Puro gifts noon, and I also chose them, at siyon my mom's Ms. absolute—office! talaga (giggles). But, we stopped doing that after my parents parted ways."

Sam also has a vivid recollection of her saddest Christmas: "I was only 6 years old when my parents separated. I was too young then, but I remember asking my mom on Christmas Eve, 'Where's Daddy?' She said, 'Don't worry, you'll spend Christmas with him tomorrow.'"

For Jericho Rosales, his happiest Christmas was when he moved into his own home: "I bought all kinds of things for my family! It's a day for family, friends and loved ones—and a day of forgiveness, hope and love. More than that, it's about home, when birth should remind us of how much God loves us!"

Passport to fame

Daddy Bian loves playing Santa to her godchildren—and she's happiest when she gets to spend time with them. "Sentimental" has been her passport to fame—but, it also reminds her of her loneliest Christmas: "When I was competing in 'StarStruck,' I had to spend Christmas alone, because my manager

YMRS/GS

UP alumni go caroling

By Nestani Torre

CAROLING IN the Philippines has become just another form of begging, something that society-deems as DP (decent, Poles Centurion, lo-'ork and tired)" of.

So, he decided to do something about it—and this is how patients and their families at two hospitals got a rare treat Monday night, when a dozen or so alumni, most of them trained singers, went back to the true spirit of caroling and spreading good cheer, with beautiful renditions of Christmas carols, from the traditional ("Joy to the World") to the sentimental ("Pasko Na, Sinta Ko")—and, all for free!

Led by Cervantes and backed by the University of the Philippines Concert Association (UPAC), the all-volunteer group included mezzo-soprano Maricris Joaquin, baritone Joseph Olfindo, soprano Evelyn Ramos, Cecile de Joya, Nini Jorge, and Gabi and Ibin Francisco, and tenors Ozzah Ong and Paulo Lim.

After a brief rehearsal at UP's Bahay ng Alumni, they braved the storm's early-evening traffic and sped on their first stop, the National Children's Hospital on E. Rodriguez, Jr. Avenue in Quezon City, and rehearsing further in the way. There's nothing like a careful of

UP 04

BRILLIANT voices leave the spirits of patients and their caregivers.

Grieving and giving in the aftermath of tragedy

By Nestor U. Torre

WE JOIN other former residents of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities in mourning the many deaths there last week due to Typhoon Sendong, and urge our Inquirer readers in Zamboanga del Sur, Misamis Occidental and other areas of Mindanao devastated by the tragedy to help.

The disaster's timing, just a week before Christmas, couldn't have been worse, which makes the suffering and sense of loss even more bitter and painful to bear.

Donations

Cash donations may be coursed through the Inquirer Help Fund's Bank of the Philippine Island's Current Account No. 0891-1007-76 under the name Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc., until Dec. 29—or call the PDI corporate affairs office at 897-0000 and 896-6128.

The need is great, so please be generous. We say just, aside from the currency, we've been connecting our friends and colleagues in gray and shaw from the heart—and pocket—because we've received harrowing reports from relatives and friends in Cagayan de Oro whose accounts have further deepened the sense of entire communities that have vanquished their towns or mass death in the face—and survived.

They may have chosen the Grim Reaper, but many of their loved ones didn't, so the loss and compassion is

EDITORIAL [illegible]

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Lollie Mara is ready for more exciting challenges

By Nestor U. Torre

MARA. "Show must go on" attitude, dependability and versatility.

FOR MANY years, Lollie Dobol Mara never thought of becoming an actress, despite her exceptional beauty highlighted by her paradoxical "expressive-eyes, low-uniquely"-textured speaking voice, and her lithe body to the performing arts and the world of TV and film, thanks to her late brother, entertainment editor and scriptwriter, Manny Dobol.

She knew many people in the biz...directors, writers, producers—and some of them absolutely doted on and loved her, but she brushed off their offers and lucrative terms—until a producer, through mutual friend, Jolly Sap Dasa, got her to agree to a meeting.

The encounter was a heavy mano ario on the pioneering soap, "Flor de Luna" —which hosted for years and got Lollie fully into the swing of things, alongside her sweetheart Mandoy and SOTVMainstaying.

Presence

Lollie many talents who "appear and disappear" on the TV and film screens, Lollie has been a regular presence, appearing in all sorts of roles (generally "majestoon," as Indio Nobe Bautista [sonny] and in all kinds of shows and movies—from the sublime to the sublimely silly—including more than a dozen telenovelas!

They include "Hiku Negrita," "Zorra," "Victimia Rose," "Princesa ng Banyera" and the very recent "Bora Ay Pag-ibig."

We asked, amused as Enid can relay TV directors date on Lollie, and learned that, aside from her obvious talent and versatility, they like her dependability and professionalism, and lack of ego.

Having cut her production teeth in the theater, her "show must go on" attitude and ability to work with all sorts of people in many different and sometimes exceedingly challenging circumstances have served her in good stead in her TV/film career.

Lollie is also popular with movie directors, and feels privileged to have been mentored by the best of them, including Lino Brocka, Lamberto Avellana, Eddie Romero, Gerardo de Leon, Mel Chionglo, to films like "Bilanca," and "Ala Eh, Magkaro Moo Ako."

Years there, she learned movieness, paying attention to significant details, and insightful characterization—because she regards as priceless, because they were impacted to her by the best in the biz.

What does she get from acting, aside from the financial perks? Lollie shares, her expressive eyes lighting up, "It's different from what I usually do, as I have to tap into characters that are not me. It's fun—that's exciting and fulfilling, because I end up learning more about myself in the process.

Good friends

"It's also a psychic challenge to play so many different people. And working with other actors, some of whom have become my good friends through the years, makes me feel that I'm a part of a whole show-biz and brotherhood...or circle artistic community."

If she had her choosers, what role would she most want to play? Lollie laughs and shares, "A mad character like Boots Davis' role in 'Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?'—talk about exploring new and far-out dimensions, that would be it!"

—Well, she certainly has the "Bette Davis Eyes" for it! (Contact Lollie at 776-6847 and 0917 528-7732.)

Fundraising concert for flood victims

SHARE. Performs at Rockwell first.

FROM 8 p.m. to midnight on Dec. 26 at the Rockwell Tent, the jazz concert, "Helping Mindoro Grow," will raise funds for the victims of Typhoon Sendong. Organizers de Ore and Bijan titles. Performers include Bobo, Noel Cabangon, Lolo Mojares, Ivy Violen, Alex Ferguson, Tom Rodi, Miss Jewel, Arthur Huanseng, 6668 Jazz, Jeanne Tiongco, Henry Kmtodg, Jaymelle, Guinness, The Cantpany, Edon Mendoza, Lenin and Becky Benavello, the Music Making Company and Pamela de Sandra Murillo.

Montage

20th Century Fox

The 2012 offerings of 20th Century Fox have big-screen adaptations of their stories from television and books, movie franchises and comedy treats in 3D. They include "We Bought a Zoo" with Matt Damon, a new "Alvin and the Chipmunks" film ("Chipwrecked"), "Dabber Boys" with Emile Hirsch, "Tim Means War" with Reese Witherspoon, "Rascal" in 3D, the family-friendly unique take on "The Three Stooges," "Promethean" with Michael Fassbender, "Neighborhood Watch" with Ben Stiller and "Taken 2" with Liam Neeson.

DAMON. Topbills "We Bought A Zoo."

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Angry Birds flock to Nickelodeon

A new Angry Birds short film, "Wreck The Halls," comes to Nickelodeon on Dec. 23 and 25 during the Nick Xmas Holiday special beginning 10 a.m. Encore on Dec. 26 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 30 at 8:30 p.m. Log on to www.nick.com.ph for other treats.

Holiday bliss

Shangri-la Mactan Cebu provides a unique way where you can experience the holiday bliss of Christmas without the stuffy and other hassles of the season.

Room rates are inclusive of complimentary breakfast, gym, sauna, pool and other bliss-inducing perks. Special treats are also in store for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve—call (032) 238-7777.

Pinay rock icons

On Jan. 26, 2012, Pinay rock icons perform at Music Museum in the special "Rockin' the Room" show, which features Joey "Pepe" Smith, Bene Garcia, Lolita Carbon, Betty Ocbarian, Gary Ross, "Iggie" de Castro and Ramon "RJ" Jantoco. Call 891-9999.

Smart Pinoy Grand Salubong

This year's Smart Pinoy Grand Salubong at Naia will be giving arriving Filipino passengers (until Jan. 2012 the chance to win prizes at the Smart Pinoy booth. Top prizes include two new units of Toyota Avanza.

Grieving and giving . . .

From page 6

despair is overwhelming. As we watch TV coverage and images of once safe and quiet neighborhoods known to us as we ourselves now blighted and ravaged almost beyond recognition, we similarly and empathetically feel like we've descended into the pits of despair and desolation, from which only the flickering light of faith and hope in the help of caring friends and strangers offers the possibility of salvation—and redemption.

Tributary

Even more personally, we recall snorkeling in Cagayan when, as an impressionable adolescent, we "dared" to swim through the rolling waves of a small tributary that had swelled into a rampaging river, in order to get to our home to the city's suburbs.

We were dissuaded from rashly taking our life only by the fearful and encouraging cries of our grandmother, whose urgent shouts finally convinced us to wait for the flood waters to subside. What, we wonder now, would have happened to us if we hadn't heeded her entreaties against?

As we grow up in Cagayan, we also learn to contend with other tragedies, like fires, explosions and a couple of accidents near New Year's Eve, in which some of our own acquaintances had perished ...but, they were all relatively minor compared to the "biblical" tragedy that our hometown and its communities residents are contending with this Christmas.

Please, let's pray for them and help them in any and all ways we can!

FANS' DAY

Painful lesson

By Andy Bais

CHRISTINE ALMARIO marks somewhere, suppose: "Now that Vilma Santos and Ritz Chiu are doing a movie together, how about Nora Aunor and Sarah Geronimo playing mother and daughter?" Younger moviegoers will especially benefit from these collaborations. If both movies become blockbusters, a Nora-Vilma "reunion" movie shouldn't be far behind!"

Other letters:

Ricky Agpaoa, student: "I'd like to commend our TV networks for the round-the-clock updates on the aftermath of Typhoon 'Sendong' in Northern Mindanao and some parts of the Visayas. Some news people even walked the extra mile by going to the affected areas to provide first hand information about this latest calamity. It's sad that only during tragic situations like this do we realize how negligent we've become of our environment—a very painful and costly lesson learned, indeed!"

Exchanges

Merriane Libunao, television writer: "TV5's 'Bagsik na Hinghe' has a scene where gaining fire is made the way Amy Perez and Chegoi Ross beat the morning chest. They're coming to watch, going about their exchanges in an awkward and scattered manner. The only qualification is the lady in charge of the entertainment segment. Why does she pro. accurate detail as dated and direct

PUNO. Warm-tita.

CHIU. Teams up with Vilma Santos.

as dance? Lately the network's in-house students is pushing for spirals too much, and raters are hard to be funny. Sayonds pang mungo para sa mga 'jokes' nyo?"

E-mail bais.andy@yahoo.com

Holiday-themed films spread hope, peace

By Bobit Carvajosa

HOLLYWOOD MAY have many Jewish producers, but filmmakers have clearly seized on a profitable market for holiday-themed movies. Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ, which separates the Jewish Old Testament from the Christian Bible.

In last predominantly Jewish city-history school to a prohibition, Barbra Streisand raved in classic "Merry Christmas!" When she became a superstar, she couldn't exclude Yuletide carols from her albums. In fact, her rendition of "Silent Night" is one of the movie's most memorable moments ever.

"An Affair to Remember" was one of the biggest box-office hits of the '50s. The sentimental romantic melo stars Irishman Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr happens during Christmas—a happy event that spreads cheer during the holidays!

STEWART AND REED. Typical durably popular Christmas film, "It's A Wonderful Life."

Horrors of war

Even the anti-war film, "Stalag Luna," starring Mischa Auer and Mary Montgomery Clift, ends during the Christmas season. Its message of hope and peace is inherent in the Yuletide spirit, albeit in being juxtaposed with the horrors of war.

Mockingbird starred the multi-hued "Going My Way," especially when Bing Crosby symbolized well-loved cast with a boys' choir. He portrayed of a singing priest enticed Crosby a first dollar Dress.

In "All Mine To Give," children are separated by parents during the holidays. The lachrymose movie made brats business here, because Filipinos assume the holidays with loved ones spending time together!

Viewers also love "It's a Wonderful Life," Hollywood's most durably popular confection to the Yuletide festivities, especially since its underdog protagonist, James Stewart and Donna Reed, represent the "good" Americans pitted against the "cruel" likes of Lionel Barrymore.

Their family stands for what is good about the holidays, while Barrymore represents

HOLIDAYTHEMED 5+

DELUDE. Her musical inhibitions.

'Memories on Two Strings' shines the spotlight on the 'hegalong'

By Rowland Torre

GOS WOU produce an album's worth of material if your main instrument only has two strings? Composer Dino de Leon answers the question with an unequivocal yes through his upcoming album, "Memories on Two Strings."

Featuring two discs—"Silence" and "Melodies"—and a total of 25 original compositions, the entire collection is a celebration of the hegalong, the two-stringed Thai-Filipino lute he put any traditional music here, though.

"The only thing traditional is the instrument," says de Leon, who also calls his first solo album "an exploration or limitation," given the fact that the hegalong only has two strings. Limited is the last word you'd use to describe the compositions in "Memories on Two Strings," however—they delve into a wide range of music genres, from pop to rock to ambient to jazz.

Versatile

In fact, in the hands of the right musician, the instrument proves itself to be remarkably versatile. It sounds very lush 'n' full in the driving "Stormy Night," for example, then it goes techno in "Fearless," "Japanese Garden" and "Urban Legend," before turning bluesy in "Fly." Then, there's the Bollywood-flavored "Samson," the disc ender for "Heroes."

"I didn't have any inhibitions here," says de Leon, who adds that ethnomusicologists might wince at how he bends the strings of the hegalong. "I want to explore the many ways that the instrument can adapt to the touch of music that most Filipinos listen to today. How will it survive if you don't move it forward?"

The composer, who won awards for his sound and music for cutting for Mowelfund's "Bunong" on this year's Cinemalaya, is a champion of the hegalong, which he has been playing for more than 18 years, often with his hand, Mahilling.

He says it is something of an underdog in the country's history of ethnic musical instruments. "It's not as well-known as the kulintang, for example—but, it's more flexible, because it's more melodic," he says. He goal is to make it a more mainstream and modern instrument—just as Carlos's nose and Japan's drummers are being adopted by today's musicians.

De Leon composed and arranged all of the songs in the album, which was reproduced by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA). With the exception of a few pieces, in most of the tracks here, the only live instrument is the hegalong. "I took advantage of the technology available today," he says, "but I still use basic guitar action."

Lyrics

The eclectic color is Bird's Candy Glass, who lends her voice to the song, "Mauvelus," a sentimental number with lyrics by Verna Nobo Acosta. Other guests: Zab Reyes, vocals on "Fine Day" and "The Faulty Gene"; Charmaine Wans, flute and vocals on "Immoral"; Jeanne Mears, who adds her voice to "Rising Sun" and "Feather"; Jal Durán, guitars on "Stormy Night," and Abe Dalusan and Bimbi Lipana, vocals and percussion on "Screaming." Dalusan also contributed lyrics for "Dreaming" and Shallah Mouna wrote the lyrics for "Fine Day" and "That's All."

"Memories on Two Strings" will be released first at newsstand lastly outlets, and will be officially launched at the Conspiracy Garden Café on Jan. 14.

Veterans Bank unveils photo mural in Baguio

By Barry Umerez

DECEMBER IS a merry month because of Christmas that, if we look back at our nation's history, we recall a time when the Yuletide holidays were less festive.

It was December when World War II began in Baguio City. Those memories are depicted in a photo mural exhibit at the Baguio branch of Veterans Bank, detailing historical events involving the City of Pines during the war.

Baguio and Benguet were sites of significant events, like the surrender of Gen. Yamashita Yamashita after his surrender to Hungos, Hugos on Sept. 3, 1945, which marked the end of World War II in the Philippines.

70th anniversary

The events coincides with the 70th anniversary of the invasion of Japanese forces here on Dec. 8, 1941, which key locations around the archipelago were bombed. The mural features seven before-seven wartime images of Camp John Hay, Session Road and the Baguio Cathedral.

It is the exhibit's intention to bring important historical events to the consciousness of tourists and the Filipino youth, and share our forefathers' sacrifices during the war.

PRSP's fun-filled party

WEDDING group in full swing regalia.

THE PUBLIC Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) recently held its annual Christmas party in which members were presented with different personalities by using groups.

Jessup Inc, composed of Joey Palacios, Chit Arce, Joji Ramoso, Lou de Guzman, Jaya Soliman, Chino Manlapaz, Yelly Clemente, Suzette Nural, Pinky Ruiz and this writer, romped off with the top prize.

We worked hard—and stroked

dar moment! Jaya brought props from Oriosaria—colorful wigs, stylish shades, swanky hats, and plastic guitars with blinking lights. We brought the house down as we sang and danced to "Jingle Bell Rock"—truly a joyous, rowdy and fun-filled party!

In our boss' station, Merry Christmas!

***

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NEW YEAR'S EVE - PG13
12:30, 3:45, 6:00, 9:20
MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - GHOST PROTOCOL - PG13
1:00, 3:45, 6:30
MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE: GHOST PROTOCOL - PG13
12:30, 3:15, 6:00
THE LION KING (3D) - G
1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30
MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE 4: GHOST PROTOCOL (IMAX) - PG13
1:30, 4:30, 7:30
HOUSE SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

NEWPORT CINEMAS
Resorts World Manila
NEW YEAR'S EVE
10:45pm, 1:00am, 3:15am
DREAM HALL
LION KING in 3D
10:45am, 1:00pm, 3:15pm, 7:00pm
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE GHOST PROTOCOL
9:00am, 11:45am, 2:30pm, 5:45pm
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE GHOST PROTOCOL
12:45pm, 3:15pm, 6:00pm
LOT NEWPORT MALL at RESORTS WORLD MANILA, PASAY CITY

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: GHOST PROTOCOL
2 THE LION KING
3 THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN
4 NEW YEAR'S EVE
5 IMMORTALS
6 3D DIGITAL CINEMA
7 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: GHOST PROTOCOL
CINEMA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 | EASTWOOD CITY WALK 1, EASTWOOD CITY, BAGUMBAYAN, QUEZON CITY

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 THE LION KING 3D
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3 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 4
4 IMMORTALS
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THE ROAD
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 4
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 4
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 4
MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - GHOST PROTOCOL 2D

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
THEATRE ART
PROMENADE
GOT FRIDAYS
RESTAURANT

Dennis Trillo learns from his mistakes

By Nestle Zulla

DENNIS TRILLO enters another challenging role—a newly married guy who has to—at the Metro Manila Film Festival entry "Dukot ng Buhay" and Tanauhan." The newlywed-turning-actor has been playing a mix of tormented good guys and nefarious baddies for about a decade now—a testament to his versatility. But, Dennis knows only too well what else he has—a pesky pair of ears that, like chubby hanging earlobes for partners.

So when we're talking about these controversially colored romances in one way of keeping themselves in the limelight, Sir Dennis: "Throughout my career, hagi ko kung anong nagiging issue ko," he says. "Kapag nagiging issue ko, ibig sabihin lang nun, nakakausap ako ng mga tao. Kasi kung wala akong issue, ibig sabihin, wala rin akong project."

He adds: "Kung ano man ang issue ko, ang importante, nakakausap ako ng mga tao. Kasi kung wala akong issue, ibig sabihin, wala rin akong project."

Dennis explains, "Being able to use my voice to promote my energy, so that when I'm in front of the camera, I'm focused. Siguro gusto nga nilang I'm focused. Siguro gusto nga nilang mag-focus ako sa pagkanta, pero mas gusto ko talaga ang pag-arte."

Which does he find more challenging—performing live or on-screen? He answers, "There's more challenge in character roles—mas maraming curls. I've been in those but for some time now I'm the bigger, strong, I kept playing bad-seed-boss, mafia-related roles—then, I got tired of them. I want portraying characters that are kind of

TRILLO. Portrays a married CPA in MMFF entry.

'real'—kinds na nakakausap ngayon kung madami akong reasons.

"My close dressing role to Andrea Brazil was significant, because it opened doors for me. It gave me great pleasure to explore and experiment—it makes me realize na ang dami ko pa palang hidden ng instrument I don't want to be stereotyped in a certain role...I want people to say, 'Ah, kaya 'yan pala ang magaling gawan ni'."

Gym rat

He gives a hearty grin (or is he SMIRK?) now. How does he stay in shape? He replies, "Mayroon akong mini-gym sa bahay. Nagpa-trainer ako sa mixed martial arts lately. The gym is near my place, which makes it accessible and convenient for me."

Let's get a little personal: What issues you in a gal? He hems. "I'm drawn to women who are close to themselves...gusto ko 'yung confident in herself-na alam niya ang sarili niya."

How does he deal with ang-issues? Dennis quips, "Ito, I'm very thought-a lot. I often my partner, pero hindi naiintindihan ang mga personal issues because of the nature of my job. I tell myself to be tough and stay focused when controversies come knocking—and I make sure I learn from my mistakes!"

'Nono' goes to Berlin

By Rica Arevalo

IT'S HEARTENING to know that one of the Filipino films competing in the 62nd Berlin International Film Festival next February is named "Nono," which stars for the Silver Bear award in the Generation Kplus program (for movies featuring young children).

We sat down with Tuhrudes last week when we both served as judges at the Pinoy Shorts! The 2011 CCP Christmas Short Film Competition. He confesses, "I'm very close to my mother(s) and sisters. When they invited me, I was like, 'I'm auditioning for Arthur—probably because I remind them.'"

The Film stars indie Actors Samson Pelo, who has a cleft lip and palate, and is trained by young Cine Zing for director to join a freelance reunion. "What happens next is a fun riot that also involves his family, friends and schoolmates.

Samson was discovered at an audition by Tuhrudes Quezon City, whom he lives as an "informal son" for. He then underwent a five-month voicing workshop.

Tuhrudes shares, "When he was operated on as a baby, his lola accidentally dropped him down on his cheek, resulting in a dislocated jaw. That's why, he must through surgery via Operation Smile."

Grant

"Nono" received a script development grant from the Cinema Gloria Grand of the Pasay International Film Festival in 2008. This week, it will have a theatrical run in Seoul, Korea, as part of the "Eight Colors of Asian Cinema" showcase, which features films from Thailand, Malaysia

THE YOUNG cast of "Nono" (From left) Allen Christopher, Raoul Abdul and Arch Anton Tenorio.

and the Philippines.

Rico did her part into the flesh, role? "We sent a scanner when we were in Busan. The Cinema screening committee knows us matters—they saw something in our film that's deserved like."

Mike wants to take his cast and production team to Germany for he laments, "The kids have no passports, yes—and we have to enter funds. We need all the help we can get."

By Nestor U. Torre

THE "MISSION: Impossible" film franchise has fashion revved up its unpredictable stuff-to-expect-when-it-comes-to its latest and most recent "impossible" installment, "Ghost Protocol."

In crack and cyberjack team of top agents, led by Tom Cruise as Ethan Hunt, engage in a seemingly endless series of superhuman escapes and assaults that are pure cut-from-comic-book-stuff, as we try to keep up with their prodigious to be filled and moved to—bizarre.

As for the movie's production and creative team, judging from their own perfected imaginings, they seem to be on a consistent action high inclined by success—not only and mostly of cinematic approval.

The espionage tennis mission, as usual, is nothing short of meeting the total elimination of human life

Truly 'Impossible'

and civilization as we know it, through a money-villain and supersecurity's instigation of global nuclear war.

Explosive devices

But, what can Cruise's character do to help ours-his-yours-and dogs in Busan? —He explains, just like many the complex's computers, plant portable explosive devices...and, laments, the "Cruise missile" is lost and active to save the world again!

"Ghost Protocol" looks on "impossible" hope of drawing-in fans!

I have at

Stars recall . . .

From page G1

went to Boracay, and I couldn't go home to my family in Iloilo, but eliminating round 'cos. So, I just stayed home and send myself to deep thought."

The newly-voiced beauties of La Brea—Marlexis Lewis, Jocelyn Virtue and Arielle Santos—spend the holidays with their families. While Marlexis juggles her time between Caloocan and Bulacan, Jocelyn bonds with her family by watching the classics of the Metro Manila Film Festival.

Plans a variable in her eyes. Arielle tells us about her food memories as a kid: "Tuwa, pancakes tuwing umaalis ng mga kapatid ko—every date tuwing bago ko mahir, para may masabi agad na pasa! 'Ui P1,200 na ako! Laughter! Tuwa ang hatid ang para ko—'

"When I sing, they'll give me more...like HOME Instrumentally, as I got older, pulot ng pasko ang hinihingay—hanggang sila nang pasko. Isa sa mga kinaiingayan ng pamilya ay pagkain ng pansit—ang magal ko—pansit, sinasabi ko. Ay, masarap a masarap talaga!"

UP alumni go caroling

From page G1

Christmas contests wanting up their impressive vocal chords to put you in a holiday mood!

The families at KCH were pleasantly surprised when the group burst into song, and thanks to the singers' strong voices, even the kids who had to stay in their beds could hear them, too! The group didn't just sing a few songs, either—they had a full repertoire of English and Filipino classics prepared, structured around Matthew 2:1-12.

Next stop was the East Avenue Medical Center, where the carolers were shepherded by Sr. Jil Roman into their West Tent. Even those who were lying down managed to sing along, with "Feliz Ni Navidad" and "Jingle Bells" proving to be the most popular carols. The group then proceeded to the Pediatrics department, where they sang to kids and their families, with some members of the staff also joining in.

The carolers weren't ready to call it a night yet! After we left them at the RAMC, they were headed to the home of National artist for Music Andrea Veneracion, who suffered a stroke a few years back and is still in recovery.

Veneracion, who received her award in 1999, is famous for being one of the country's foremost choirmasters, and for founding the Philippine Madrigal Singers.

Holiday spreads-holiday cheer better than Christmas carols that are musically and beautifully sung, and the group hopes that they were able to lift the spirits of those who are ill this season. Judging by the reactions of those who heard them, they were overwhelmingly successful!

Holiday-themed . . .

From page G1

Scrooge, the "villain" of Christmas. Despite the fact that it was filmed over 60 years ago, the movie is still used by regular Christmas fare on television.

Other notable holiday films: "Miracle on 34th Street," "Holiday Inn," "The Bells of St. Mary's," "Remember the Night," "Babes in Toyland" and "The Bishop's Wife."

Matet shares secrets of Nora Aunor as Supermom

By Andy Bais

SO MUCH has been written about Nora Aunor, but we still think least about her being a mother to Lotlot, Ian, Matet, Kiko and Kenneth. I had the rare chance to chat with Matet when she, along with younger brother, Kenneth, husband Michael Espeldo, and their two daughters, attended a Christmas get-together for her mother's fan group, Ate Guy's Friends Forever (AGFF). Excerpts:

What do you feel when you attend a get-together of Noranians?

I'm very happy. It's as if we're also part of the group, because we know most of the members—maraming hair ako se bebap when we were kids. Many of them have become our friends at kahimanan dapag nakikita ko sila, I get overwhelmed, kasi ang dami pa rin nating nagmamahal kay Mommy.

How old were you when you realized that your mama wasn't a "regular" mother?

At age 5, siguro. Kasi ang daming tao lagi sa bahay. I knew that she was going to host "Superstar" show dapag marami silang dalang damit at sapatos, at lagi siyang may make-up.

How do you react to the negative things said about your mom?

Minsan ito lang ang nakakasakit sa akin. If we don't talk to defend her, among ourselves nanaggot sa Aunor? Lately, however, I have learned to shrug off the rumors about music or avoid getting into trouble. Nung mga unang

ALONGSIDE (second from right), with Kenneth, Kiko and Matet

years ko kasi, I had things about her, 'ah ha na datubasan. Where I'm with her, we don't discuss negative issues. Kun, I know when she's hurting.

What's the most serious matter you've discussed with your mom?

That I'm an adopted child. She told me when I was 13. Para kinda na ako nagalit, kun narinig ko na sa ibaligwas nanon, and she just also told me si Hopia kun lang ang paling ni Iyan sa Morning, while the rest of us were "gifts from God." At saka, akun ko ako because of mo akun nalon...si Ampo lang ang kinuwentuhan. I'm almost 39, but I have no regrets. I don't feel the need to look for my parents. Ikaanom na ako, wala akong ibang pamilya kundi nang kinagisnan ko.

How is Nora as a mother?

Hindi ako nahihiya manuod, kun you'll be reminded if you do something wrong. Pakiramdam ko, siya ng kinipan. Pagnasabihan ko siya, para di siya magtampo. Minsan lang siya ako napalo ng rulers—kasi nagmura ako when I was still in prep school.

Most endearing trait

What is her mother's most endearing trait?

She's very affectionate. Kun siyang kun lang magkasabay magpahanggang yun day kayo, matulog magpalambing at cuddle pa! Now that she's here, gusto ko siya nasa kuwarto ako. She also treats me equally.

How did you feel when you didn't see your mom for seven years?

I really missed her, especially when I became a mother myself! That was when I realized na kailangan ko talaga si Mommy. I prayed hard that she would finally come home, and I knew it would be only a matter of time. When she was away, we communicated through letter-phone calls and text messages. Kami lang si Kenneth ang di nakapunta sa Europe at States. Kasi madami ang pumasahe, and I couldn't leave my children.

What was your mom's reaction when she saw your children for the first time?

Natuwang siyempre. We ate each other the day after he arrived, kasi busy siya nung una—ang dami niyang interviews. Di kami makapag-bond, just one room clung makita!

How's your relationship with your siblings?

Close. Among magkakapatid, Kenneth is staying with me, while Kiko is with the Lot. Iyan has his a pad near our dad Bayot's compound. Every Saturday is family day, we eat together.

Here's to your acting career going?

Maligay naman ako. Hindi pa nga natapos nung "Dear Lang Ang Mahalaga" ni GMA 7, may papasok na naman ako—at ly next year, ang "Broken Vow" with Bianca King in the lead role.

What's your wish for your mom?

I hope she'll find real happiness and peace of mind—and also good health, kasi lately nag-ng mahihirin siya. —*Jc Bernardo, "A Love Transcends a Lifetime"*

From page G4

Truly 'Impossible'

roll to mind James Bond's own code for hi-tech gadgets—but, down the Stuxnet machine—an Iranian by that they hoping and spoofing up its activities, so that viewers are left dazed and breathless. Being supergeniuses, however, Cruise and his team don't appear to be even winded after all of these long chases.

—Even more impressively, their enemies are amazingly lit. The main villain, a middle-aged character, turns out to be as much fun as Cruise—with the help of a lot of visual trickery and clever editing, we imagine—and keeps up with Ethan as he runs, leaps, jumps and falls through the flick's long final sequence, stopping only to close his eyes—and die!

Technology

The Film also banks on a lot of state-of-the-art technology and newfangled inventions, like portable motion device launchers, projection screens that surround the viewer in a cocoon of film stocks and lenses, and gloves that stick to glass surfaces and enable anyone to perform Spide-Man feats of speed-defying stunts.

Also on overdrive is the production's use of a bit of "eye candy" in terms of exotic locations like Dubai and Mumbai (and other sights and sights where Ethan and his team get pursued by bureaucrats, meant to delight both the oldies and the splashier, not to mention, the spectacular and perspective-stretching travelers—who's exceedingly grateful when his armchair is converted into a combination travel and time machine, to entertain him).

Cruise and his lesser-known costars greatly benefit from the spectacular showcase that "Ghost Protocol" provides them. Paula Patton plays the spy team's lone female member, and she looks good, acts well and is "believably" deadly with her fists and kicks.

But, the Film "belongs" to Cruise, who amazes viewers with his physical feats of daring-do, which would exhaust a far younger action star. He must have trained for months to muscle up to the role's acrobatic demands—but, the "his-memory" has turned out to be worth it, because his stunts now shining more brightly than ever!

Ongoings and ingoings, the best champoo and other boob-tube booboos

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME READERS have asked for a fresh batch of TV boobers as a "Christmas present." —We're happy to oblige!

* * *

Hint: Where have your favorite videos been from far in the Philippines?

Guest: Literally, been out to sea—as she's living baby-sit na kasi.

(We hope you mean hotsie!)

* * *

Hint: How do you plan to celebrate the anniversary of your organization?

Guest: Among other plans and activities, we will have a nationwide moratorium.

(Hmm! Make sure you have enough gasoline for the trip!)

* * *

Hint: How are you making sure that you will bring home the bacon for your country in the international competition?

Guest: I've practiced and practiced so hard, I'm sure the judges will gonna like it.

(—Ill, see's let na nun...)

* * *

Hint: Who (bangle) up your family business?

Guest: Ang nuno ko ang branch-hold ng negosyo namin. (Bubbles!Sorry...)

* * *

Hint: How did you feel when you played your first starring role?

Guest: I was honored....it was an eye-opening for me!

(Ah, sa...)

* * *

Hint: What will your new show be about?

Guest: Each week, we will report about the social-cultural ongoings and ingoings of the week.

(Ongoings and ingoings? What the hell do you mean?)

* * *

Hint: When you cook fish, what style of cooking is best to bring out the flavor?

Guest: Grilling is best.

Hint: Oh, which side should we grill first?

Guest: First, the lap side, then the ejo side.

(—What!)

* * *

Hint: How did you become a leader in your profession?

Guest: Am I? Well, it's simple—you just have to make a room for others.

(That's great—if you're in the room service business!)

* * *

Hint: What can you say about your save hair product?

Guest: Parents ba—the best shampoo!

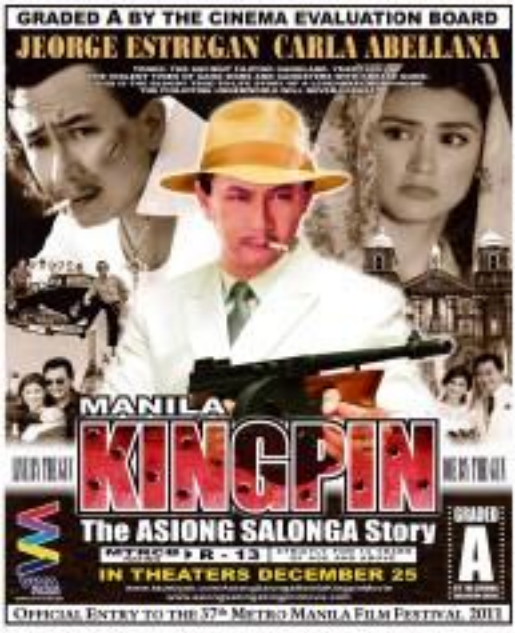
(Ah, kapsyuhn 'shampoon'?)

* * *

Hint: Who do you think will be your rivals for the crown in the beauty pageant?

Guest: Actually, so many are beautiful from Europe and other nations!

(—Peter.)



More stars reveal their Christmas plans

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Robert V. Noble

LOS ANGELES—We continue our column on stars' Christmas memories or plans.

Cristine Cruz describes the memory of one Christmas through the eyes of Coco, her 7-year-old daughter with David Arquette. "The first year that Coco was mature enough to have a list for her—and previously—that was my favorite Christmas! I remember Coco waking up. When she was a little baby, you were like, 'Look, it's Christmas!'—but she didn't know. But, there was a certain point when she wanted to open her workup, which is my favorite part. I love the little things that go quietly and shocking."

"As for a New Year's resolution, I'll say, just take care of myself. It's important. There are always so many people in photos. It's nice if sometimes you put yourself first. Of course, it's always your daughter first, and then yourself."

Christina Pitol, who stars in the TV5 series, "Pan Am": "Every other year, Christmas is at my house. I always get a Christmas tree and decorate the house. I do like big Christmas dinner at my house with my sisters, her little boy and his family and other relatives.

"I usually drive to my sister and we were trying desperately to remember myself how we cook Christmas dinner. Somehow, even though we don't every other year, we always forget how to make a turkey. Sometimes come in at the last minute and somehow."

Maria Bello, actress and co-founder of Re-Inherent, a philanthropic organization dedicated to advancing the health, safety and well-being of women in Haiti: "We always bake. My mom bakes 22 different kinds of Christmas cookies. She starts making them, like, two weeks before. I make four of the 22 varieties of cookies now!

"Christmas Eve is our big celebration. I have a son in LA. That's where we drive to the Feast of the Seven Fishes, which is an Italian tradition. (According to Wikipedia, the celebration calls meals of fish and seafood consumed since the midnight birth of the baby Jesus.)

"My mom makes the best feast of the Seven Fishes, with octopus that I include can't stand, shrimp and lobster. Last year, I tried it in my house, and I was just so overwhelmed with everything that I got seven nights of seafood for my seven fishes. On Christmas morning, we usually have a late Italian brunch—meatballs and sauce and stuff."

Eddie Murphy, who's unlikely to play controversial former Washington Mayor Marion Barry in an HBO project: "We have all the kids come to the house on Christmas. Christmas at our house is for some ways it is in other houses. Everybody gets together on Christmas day."

Chloe Moretz, the young actress (that is, not to be confused with "Hugo"): "Christmas with Joe? Another Grinch joke. But, that's never going to happen."

Email: rnoble@dailynews.com. Follow him at http://twitter.com/rvnoble.

ABCD. Big Valentin

Power Plant Mall holds New Year's Eve Countdown

Welcome 2012 with bright hopes and wonderful beginnings at Rockwell's "31 to 1" New Year's Eve countdown.

Starting 7PM, celebrate the good year that was and usher the incoming one's with good food, fine wine, great music and beautiful company all the way to 1AM. Make New Year solutions as grand fireworks displays brighten Happy New Year 2012 at 10.30PM and 12 midnight.

Barbers, Oyster Bar, the Shore, Ambrosia and Eastside have laid out their tables along the Legaspi Drive strip for cool al fresco dining and musical performances from Rudy Simmons and Brigada so you can dine in style while waiting for the magical strike of midnight. The Rockwell Tent has a life of its own as it rocks a New Year's Eve Party hosted by the best DJ's in town, Cee Drumm, Yoshi Ito, Andrei Sison, David Anderson and DJ Ruza.

Quite Christmas busy and cheerful there good Power Plant Mall shoppers to raise holiday spirits, join the Christmas Raffle where big boys looking for big toys can look forward to the biggest Christmas treat yet from Power Plant Mall. Every P1,000 single receipt purchases from all stores and P5,000 single receipt purchases from Santa's Supermarket entitle shoppers to one (1) raffle coupon that gives them a chance to win the Grand Prize – a Jaguar XF Premium luxury. Promo started last November 21, 2011 and will end on January 10, 2012. Grand Draw will be held on January 10, 2012.

For more information on how to celebrate New Year's and find more holiday cheer at the Power Plant Mall, call 8908-3702 or visit Power Plant Mall's website at www.powerplantmall.com or facebook page at www.facebook.com/PowerPlantMall.